BERSERK

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8

三浦建太郎

KENTARO
MIURA

ベルセルク

BERSERK ⑧

BY

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三浦建太郎

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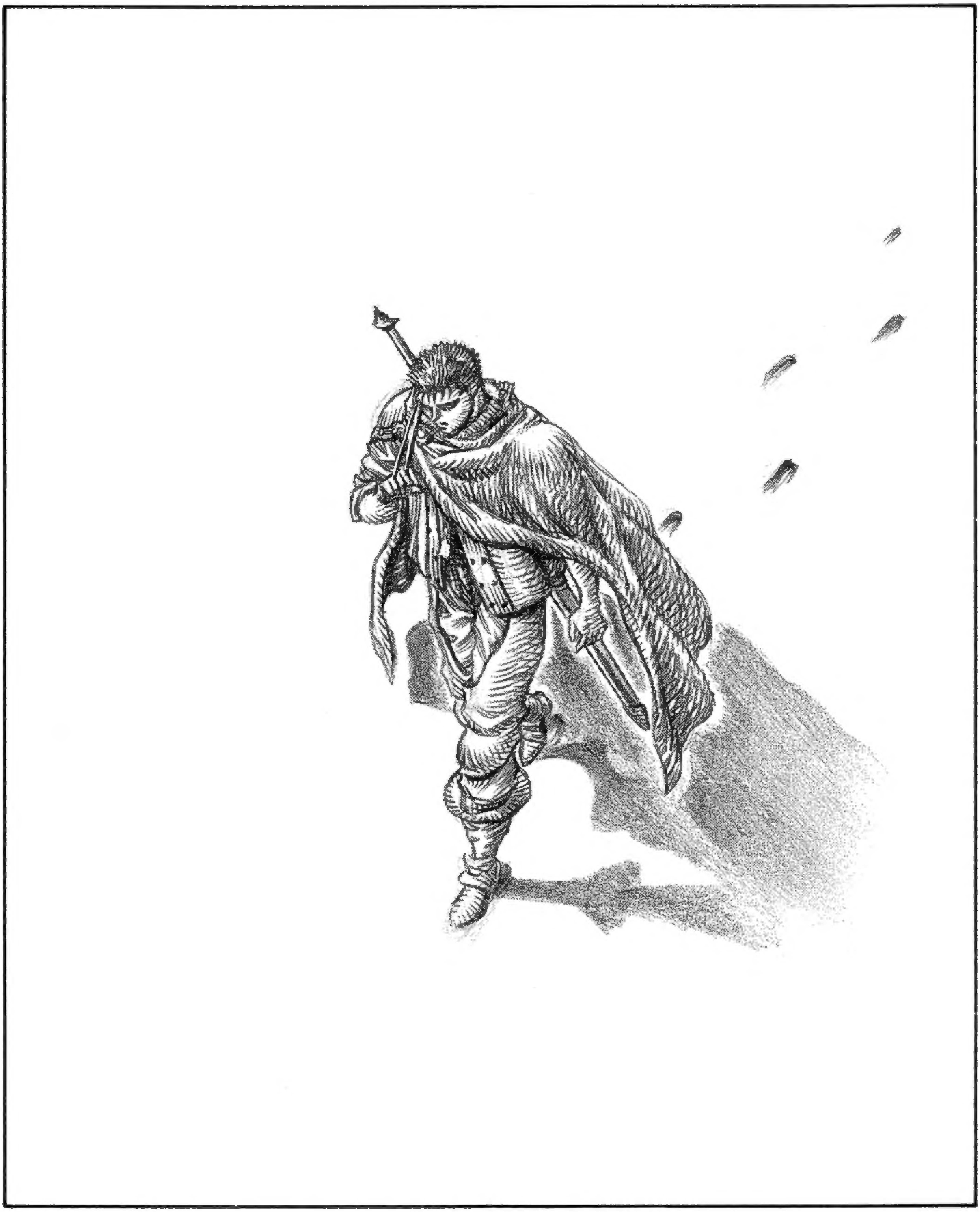

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ザザ
ザザ
ザザ
ベルセルク

ベルセルク

ドルドレイ攻略戦(5)

THE BATTLE FOR DOLDREY
CHAPTER 5

OHH...!!
HE'S DONE IT!!
IT...
...IT'S LOOKIN' BAD!!
I'M SCREWED!!

MY SWORD WAS MESSED UP FROM FIGHTING THOSE HUNDRED MEN!!
I WAS CARELESS! DAMN IT!!
WHAT NOW?!
TIME'S UP!!
RAIDERS CAPTAIN!!
ドオオオ‥‥オ‥オ‥
……
……

ゴオオ、
オオオ、、
HYAHHHH!!!
ギュン!!
ギュン
ギュン
COME ON!! COME ON!!

……
……
DON'T STRUGGLE, IT'S USELESS!!
EVEN IF YOU WISH TO FIGHT, CAN YOU EVEN MOVE FREELY?!
IF YOU OBEY ME AND THROW DOWN YOUR SWORD, I WOULDN'T BE OPPOSED TO LETTING YOU LIVE AS MY OWN PERSONAL TOY...!!
SIS!!
IF YOU REFUSE ...!!
HAIYAAAA!!

URYAA!
STAAAB!! STAB STAB STAB STAB STAB STAB!
......!!
TROUBLE ...
IF I MOVE AROUND, THE DRUG......
BIG SIS!!
GET THE HELL OUTTA MY WAY!!
どっはあぁ
ドピューッ!!

-HAHH-
-HAHH-
WHAT WILL YOU DO?!
THERE'S NOWHERE LEFT TO RUN!!
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO MY FACE!!
I THINK YOU CAN EXPECT TO *LOSE A LIMB* OR TWO!!
THEN YOU CAN TAKE YOUR TIME DECIDING WHETHER YOU'LL BE MY CAPTIVE OR DIE IN THIS PLACE!!

LET'S START BELOW THE WAIST!!
OH, NO!
WHAAAT ?!

IM...
...IMPOSSIBLE...!!
YOU WERE INTERESTING ENOUGH...
...BUT YOU'RE ALSO TOTAL SWINE.
HEH?
パックリ
HEH?

ALRIGHT!!
THE REST ARE LITTLE FISH!! ROUT THEM!!
オオオ
......!!
ビュオオオオオオ…
EN GARDE!!

ドドドド
ドド
PROTECT THE CAPTAIN!!
ゴガガガガ
ガガ
THERE'S NOTHIN' YOU CAN DO, IDIOTS!!
GET OUTTA THERE!!
NUI-SAN-CES!!

ドザザァ。
……
…!!
ビュオ　オ・オ　オオ・オ・オ。。
ビキ。
ビキビキ。

GUTS ...!!
THIS AIN'T GOOD!!
I CAN'T STOP HIS POLE-AXE WITH A PUNY KNIFE LIKE THIS!!
SON OF A BITCH!!

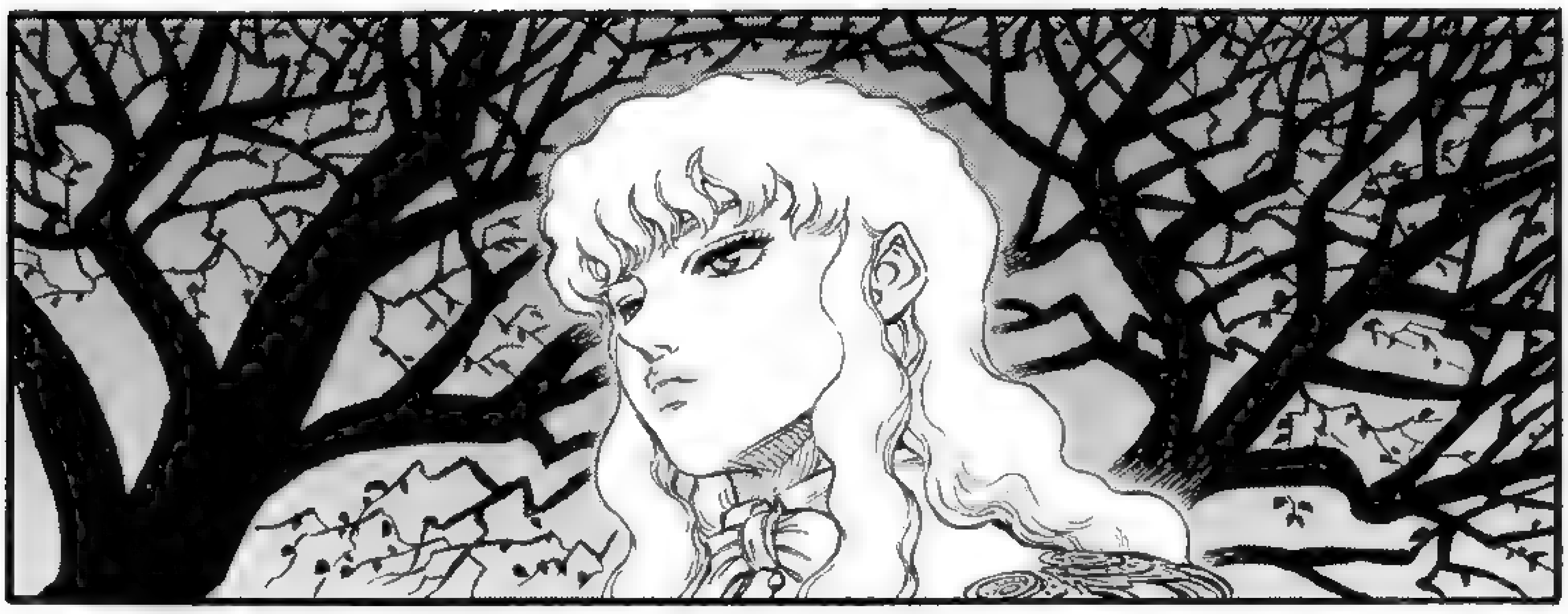
ギラ
?!
ドッ
ドボォン
WHA?!
HN?!
GUTS!!
TAKE UP THAT SWORD!!

DOHBAAA!!

ガッ
ガッ
ドシャアァ

ウオオオオオオオ・・
TH...
...THE BASTARD DID IT!!
オオオオ・オ・
TH- THAT CAN'T BE!!
THE UNBEATABLE SIR BOSCOGN!!
THE GENERAL WAS SAID TO BE THE *MIGHTIEST* KNIGHT IN ALL OF CHUDER!!
ドヨ・ドヨ・
GRRRR ......!!
THAT USELESS BOSCOGN!!
YOU FOOLS!! THE GENERAL'S DEFEAT DOESN'T AFFECT OUR MILITARY SUPERIORITY!! WHY ARE YOU FALTERING?!
AGHH!! GOVERNOR, LOOK!!
AT WHAT?!

オオ・オオオオ・・
!!
オ オオオ・・ オオオ・
THE BATTLE FOR DOLDREY (5): END

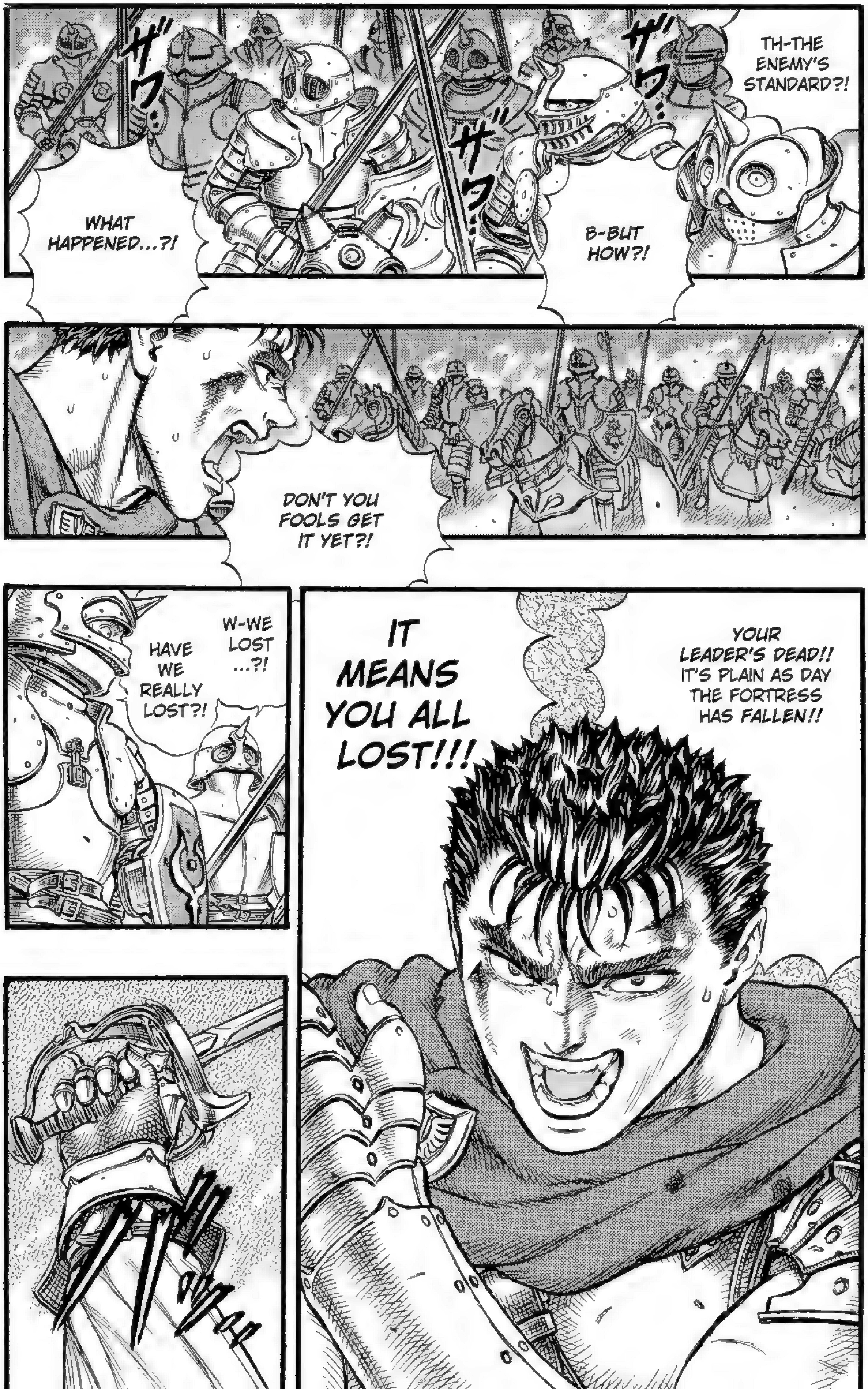


IS...
...IS THAT?!
IT CAN'T BE...!!
ビュウウウ,
ウウウウウ
ベルセルク

ベルセルク

THE BATTLE FOR DOLDREY CHAPTER 6

ドルドレイ攻略戦⑹

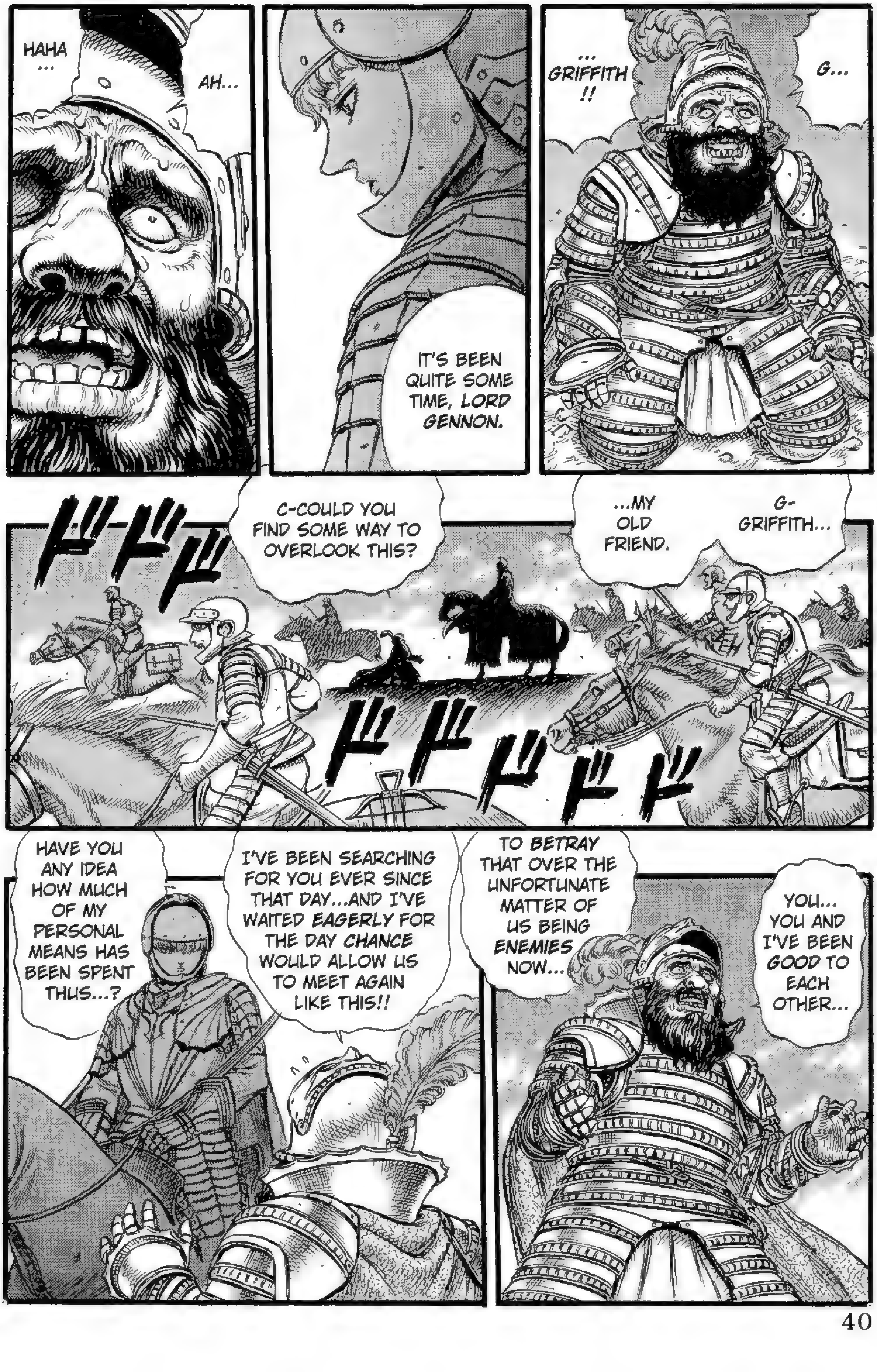

ザワ
TH-THE ENEMY'S STANDARD?!
ザワ
B-BUT HOW?!
ザワ
WHAT HAPPENED...?!
DON'T YOU FOOLS GET IT YET?!
YOUR LEADER'S DEAD!! IT'S PLAIN AS DAY THE FORTRESS HAS FALLEN!!
IT MEANS YOU ALL LOST!!!
W-WE LOST ...?!
HAVE WE REALLY LOST?!

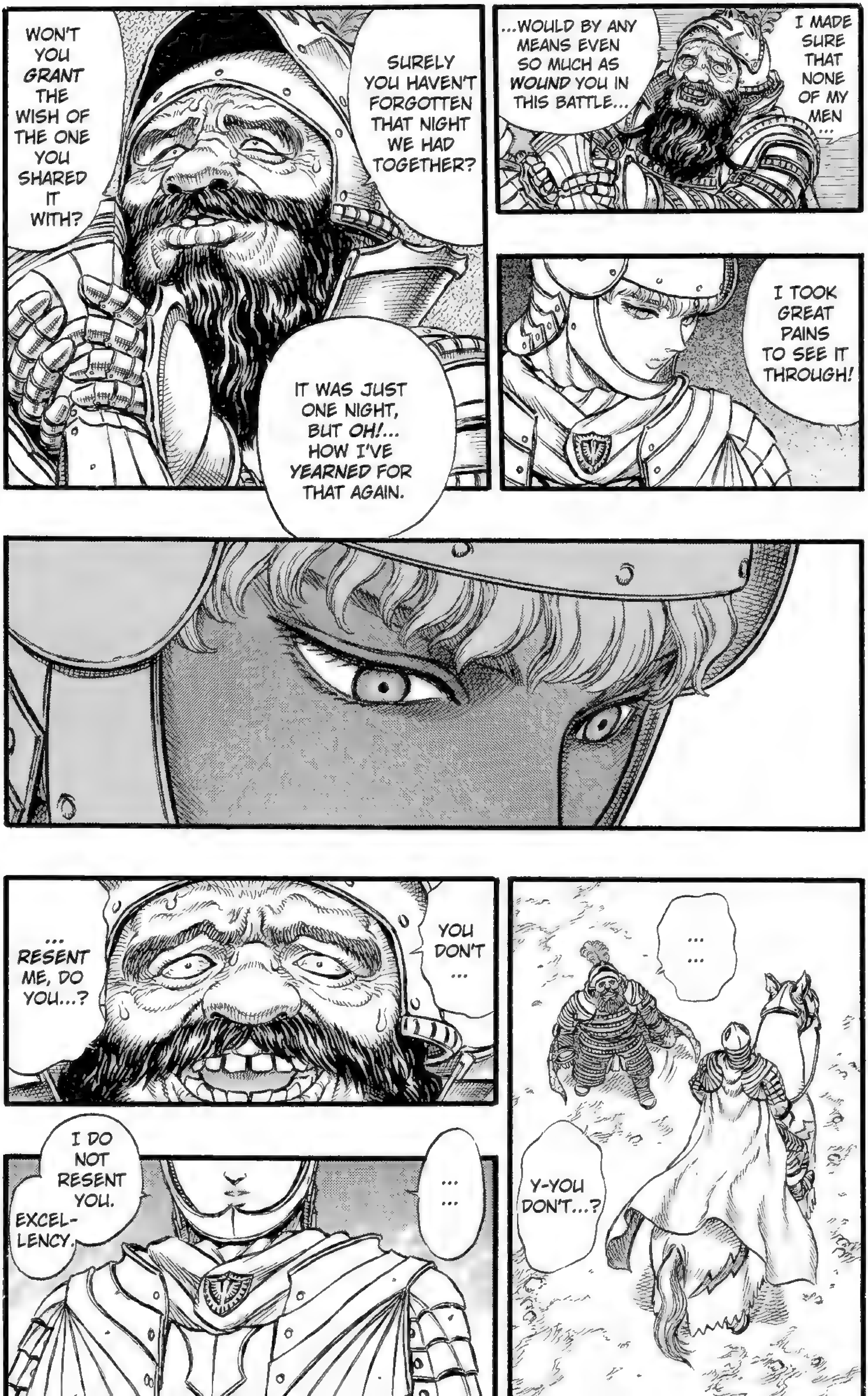
CRY OUT!!
CRY FOR VICTORY!!
ウオオオオオオオ
NO...
...NO WAY?!

COMMENCE HUNTING DOWN THE ENEMY REMNANTS!!
ジャキィィ
IF THEY FLEE THIS PLACE, WELL ENOUGH!!
SLAUGHTER EVERY LAST ONE WHO OFFERS OPPOSITION!!
オオオオ
オオオ

IT'S NO USE.
AT THIS... AT THIS RATE...
オオオ
オオオオオ
WE...
...WE'LL BE KILLED!!
ワアアアアアアア
M-MORONS!! WHO TOLD YOU TO RETREAT?!
ドドド
ドドドドドド
TURN AROUND... COME BACK!!
I-I'M YOUR SUPREME COMMANDER!!
I'M STILL HERE!!
OHH!!
ドッ
GWAH!!
ザシャア

HEE!
HEEEE…
オタ オタ
!


G...
...GRIFFITH!!
IT'S BEEN QUITE SOME TIME, LORD GENNON.
AH...
HAHA...
G-GRIFFITH...
...MY OLD FRIEND.
C-COULD YOU FIND SOME WAY TO OVERLOOK THIS?
ドドド
ドドドドド
YOU... YOU AND I'VE BEEN GOOD TO EACH OTHER...
TO BETRAY THAT OVER THE UNFORTUNATE MATTER OF US BEING ENEMIES NOW...
I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR YOU EVER SINCE THAT DAY...AND I'VE WAITED EAGERLY FOR THE DAY CHANCE WOULD ALLOW US TO MEET AGAIN LIKE THIS!!
HAVE YOU ANY IDEA HOW MUCH OF MY PERSONAL MEANS HAS BEEN SPENT THUS...?


I MADE SURE THAT NONE OF MY MEN...
...WOULD BY ANY MEANS EVEN SO MUCH AS *WOUND* YOU IN THIS BATTLE...
I TOOK GREAT PAINS TO SEE IT THROUGH!
SURELY YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN THAT NIGHT WE HAD TOGETHER?
WON'T YOU *GRANT* THE WISH OF THE ONE YOU SHARED IT WITH?
IT WAS JUST ONE NIGHT, BUT *OH!*... HOW I'VE *YEARNED* FOR THAT AGAIN.
YOU DON'T ...
... RESENT ME, DO YOU...?
... ...
I DO NOT RESENT YOU. EXCELLENCY.
... ...
Y-YOU DON'T...?

OHH... THEN...
... ...
HOWEVER, IT WOULD BE *QUITE* BEYOND REASON TO SAY THAT I'VE YEARNED FOR YOU.
I SIMPLY HAVE *NO* EMOTIONAL INTEREST IN YOU AT ALL.
YOU WERE LIKE A STONE LYING BY THE SIDE OF THE PATH I WALK...
THAT...
RESENTMENT, ENDEARMENT...
...NOTHING.
I JUST TOOK THE LIBERTY OF *USING* YOU WHEN THE OPPORTUNITY APPEARED.
..AND *NOTHING MORE.*

YOU...
...BASTARD...!!
ドッ
AL-THOUGH...
...HAVING YOUR LOOSE TONGUE SPREAD PETTY *RUMORS* ABOUT ME...
...WOULD PROVE SLIGHTLY INCONVENIENT.

ザッ
ドシャアアァ
ビュウウウゥ‥ウゥ‥‥ウゥ‥

ワァァァ…ァ…ァ…ァァ…
LOOKS LIKE THINGS ARE JUST ABOUT WRAPPED UP!!
THE ENEMY ALL SCATTERED AND RAN!!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT WORKED OUT THIS WELL!!
YEAHHH! WE REALLY STUCK IT TO 'EM GOOD!!
ARE YOU OKAY, SIS?
YEAH, I'M FEELING A LITTLE BETTER...
DON'T MIND ME...YOU GUYS GO SEE IF ANY ENEMIES REMAIN IN THE FORTRESS.
YES, MA'AM.
HEY!! COME ON, WORK TIME!!
ハァ…
…… …… ……

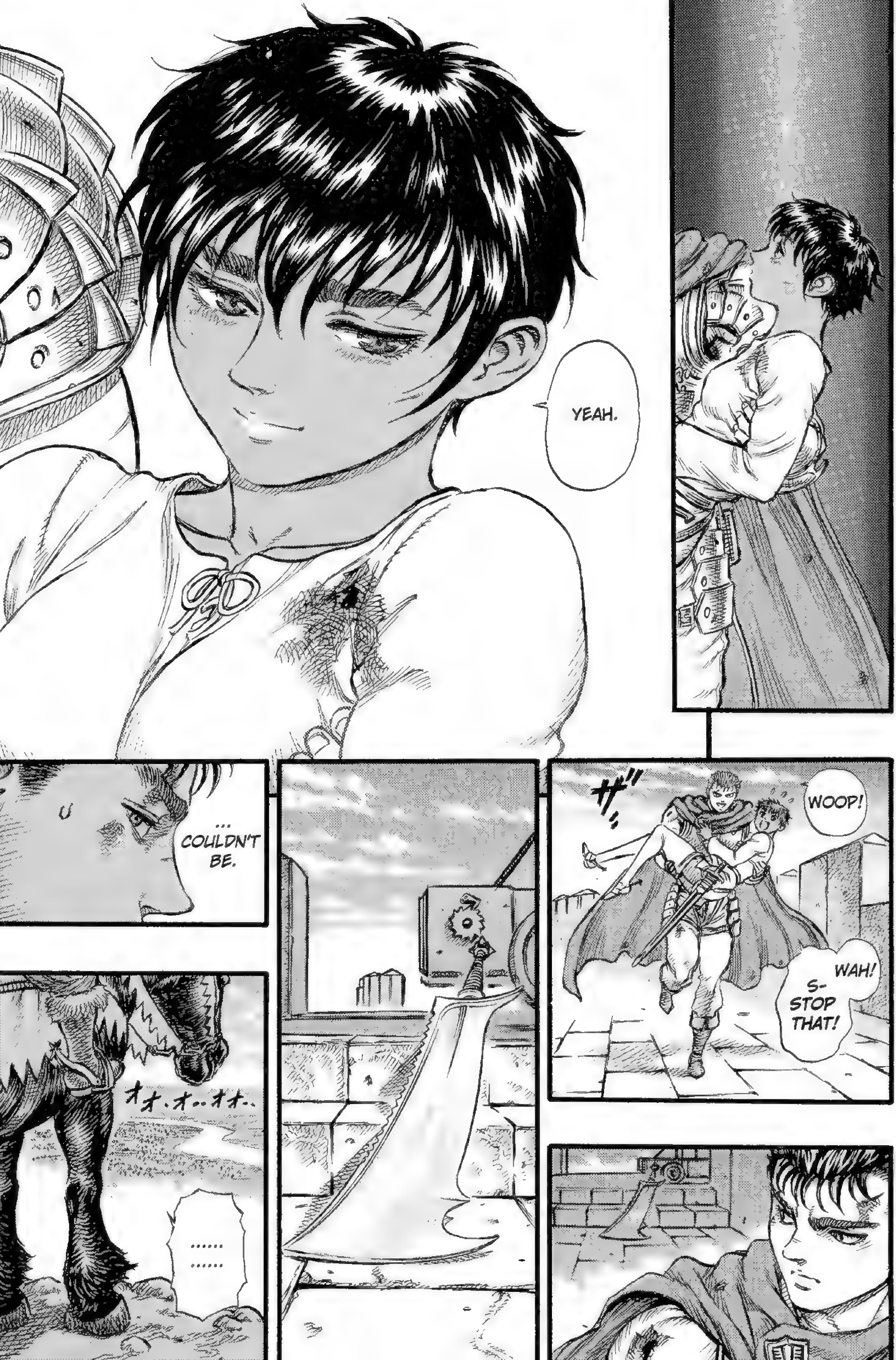
YO.
TOUGH DAY.
!
WHAT'S WRONG?
EH, IT'S JUST A SCRATCH.

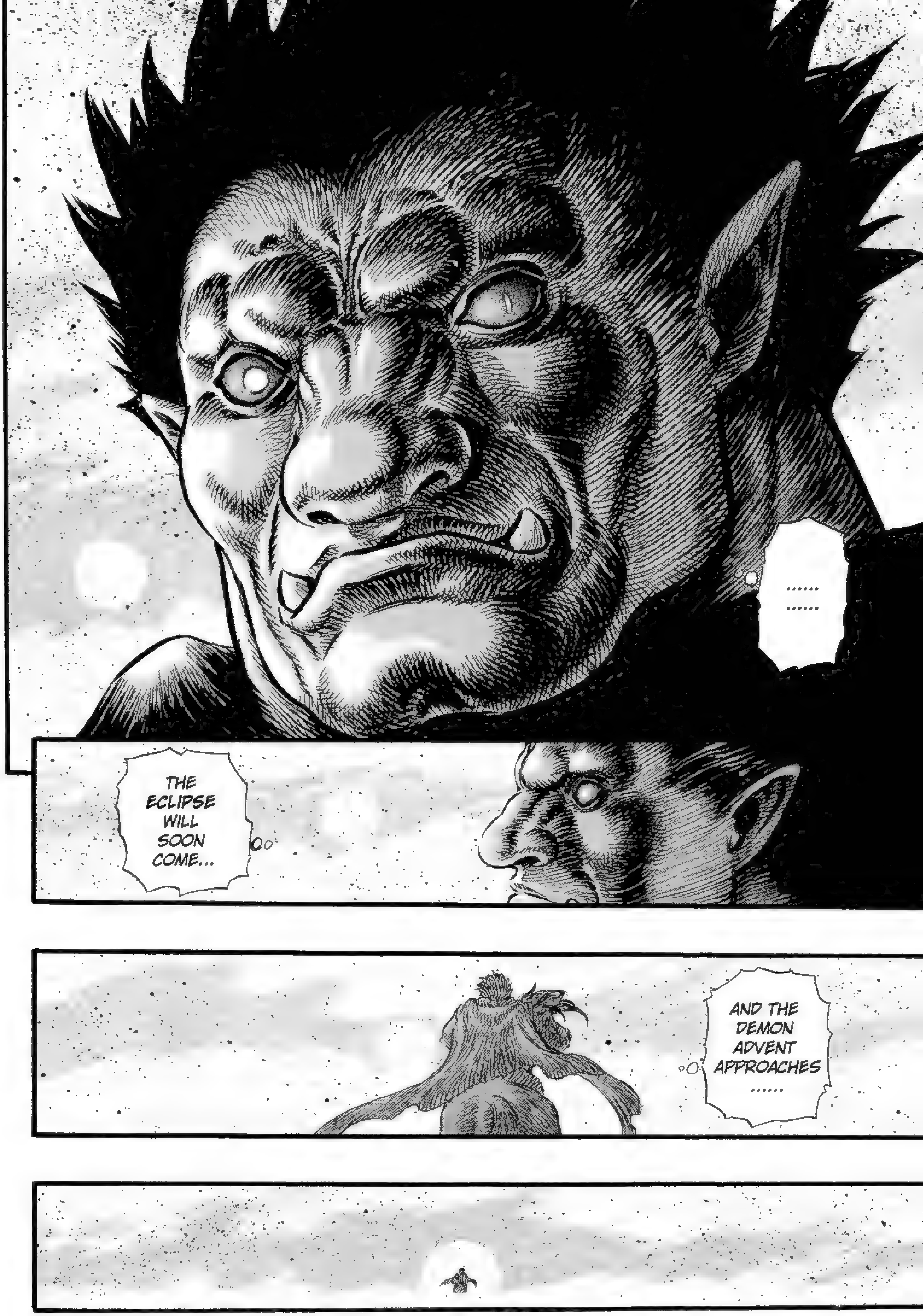
COULD YOU GIVE ME A HAND?
...OR THAT'S WHAT I'D LIKE TO SAY.
オ オ
オ オ オ オ オ オ オ オ

BREATH-TAKING...
......
ポロ
HEY?

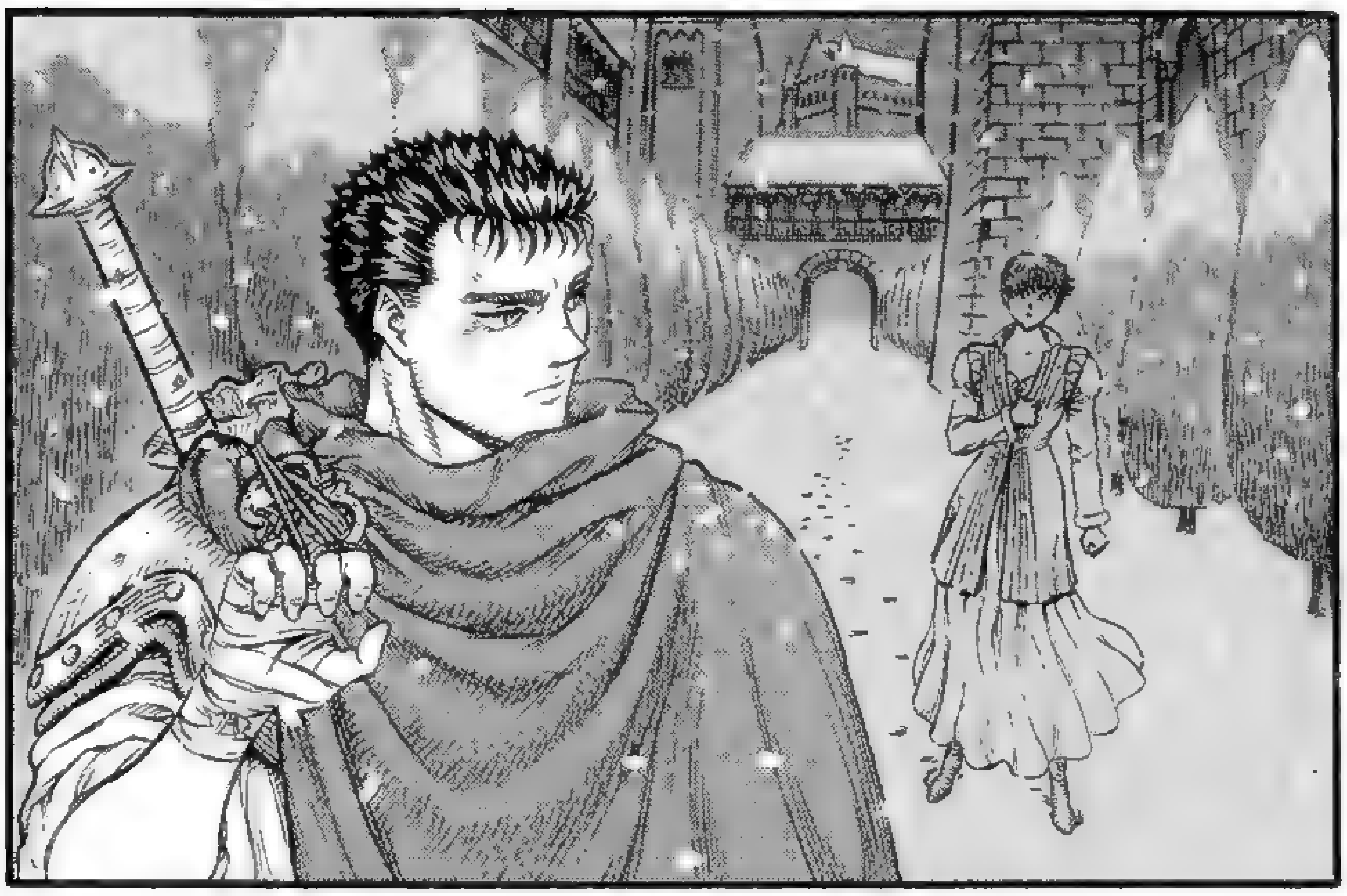
IT'S STRANGE...
ACTUALLY...
I ALWAYS THINK THIS...
...WHEN THE BATTLE IS OVER AND GRIFFITH IS SURROUNDED BY EVERYONE CHEERING IN VICTORY...
THAT HE'S SOMEHOW OUT OF REACH...
THAT HE EXISTS SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY...
AND IT HURTS.

THAT AIN'T THE CASE......
EH?
ガラァァン…
ガバッ
YOW ...!!
...HEY.
H...
YOU'LL NEVER GET ANYWHERE JUST STANDIN' HERE WATCHIN' HIM.
LET'S GO.
GO TO MEET YOUR LEADER.


YEAH.
WOOP!
WAH! S-STOP THAT!
... COULDN'T BE.
オオ・オ・・オオ・・
......
......

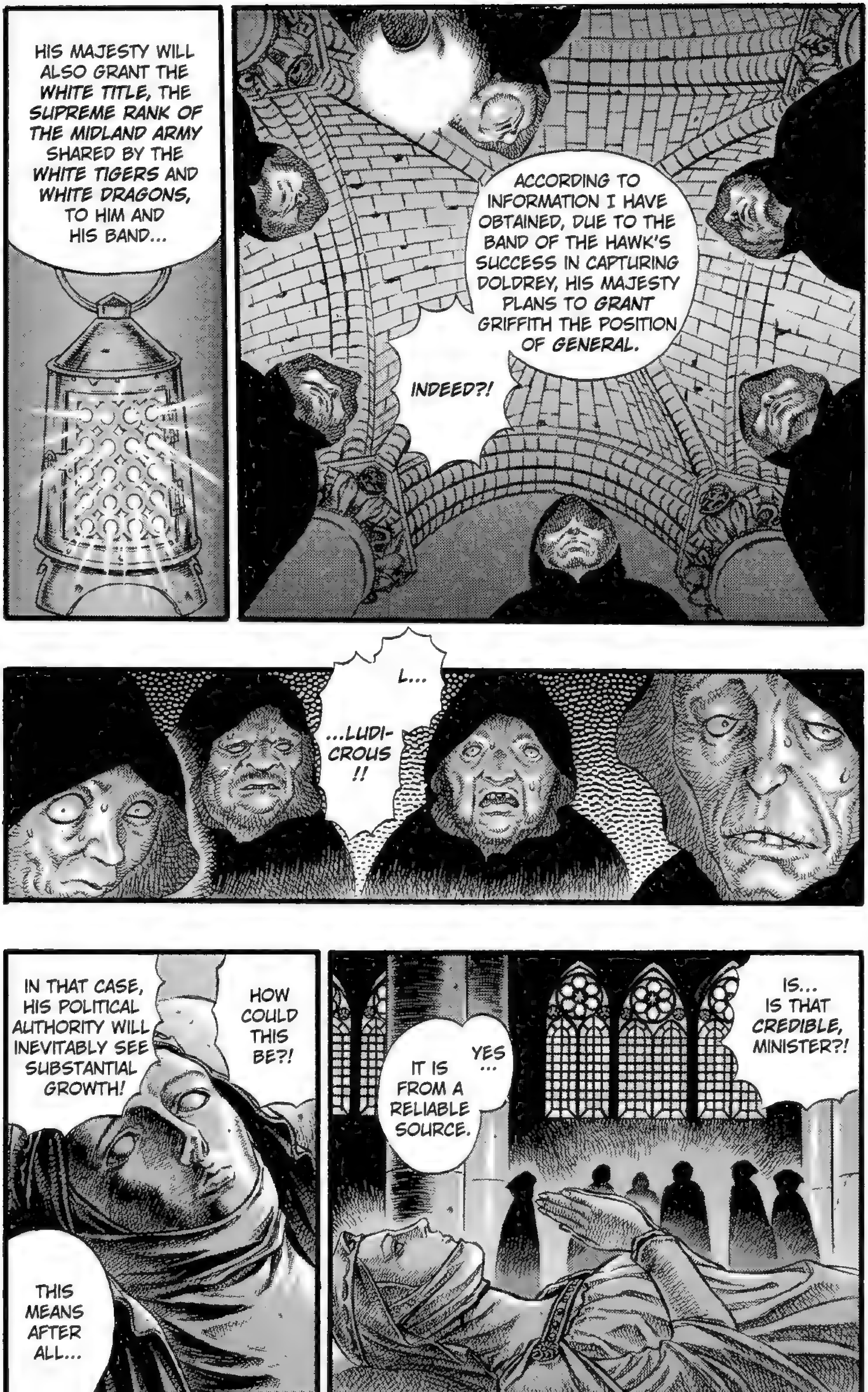

……
……
THE ECLIPSE WILL SOON COME...
AND THE DEMON ADVENT APPROACHES ……

THE BATTLE FOR DOLDREY (6): END



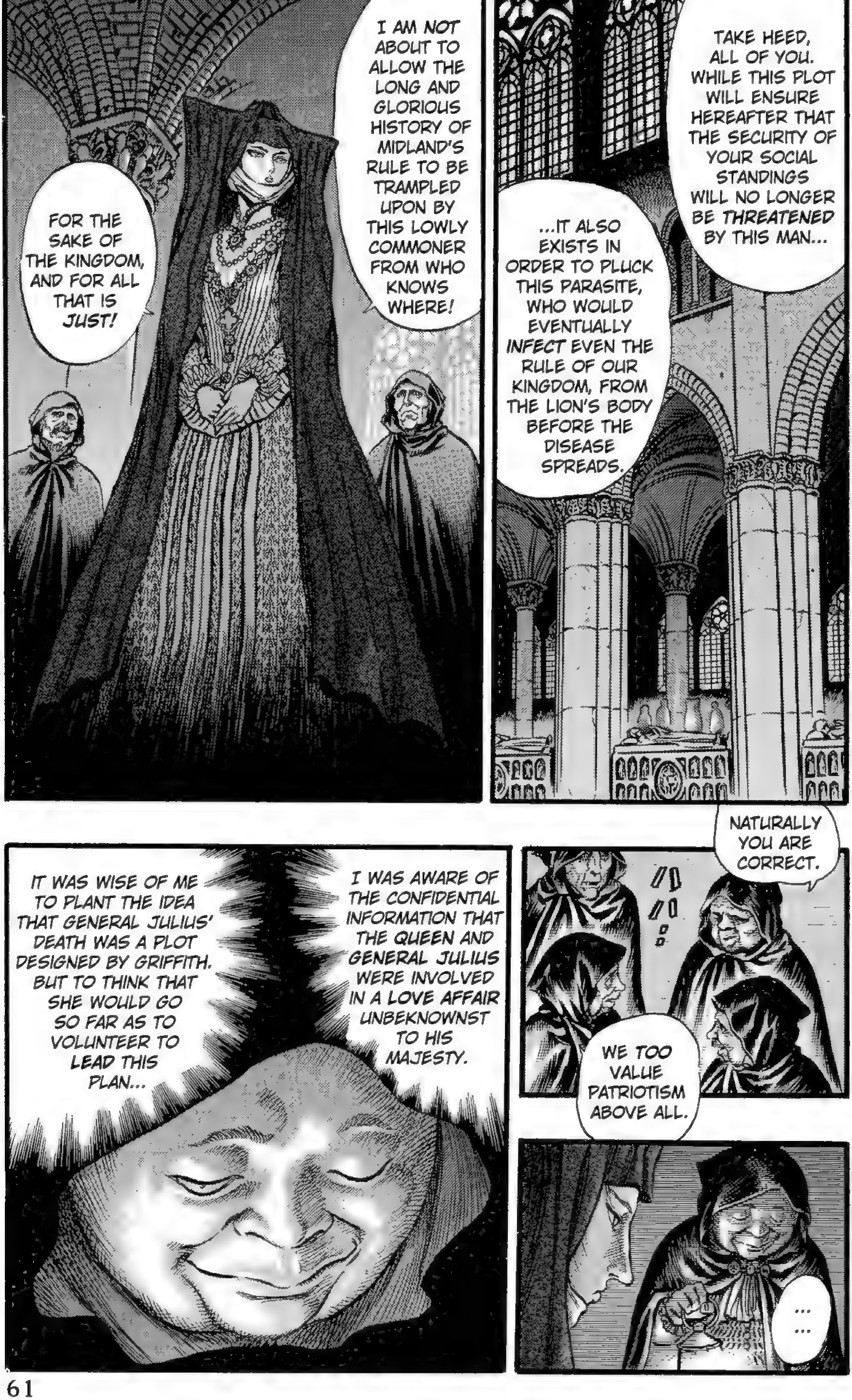
TRIUMPHANT RETURN

GRIFFITH HAS DONE *VERY WELL* FOR HIMSELF THESE YEARS SINCE HE APPEARED IN *MIDLAND.*
HIS AMBITION IS *OUTRAGEOUS!* HEEDLESS OF HIS OWN SOCIAL STANDING... *UNPARALLELED IMPUDENCE!*
DOLDREY HAS FALLEN.
THE WAR, WHICH HAS GONE ON SO LONG, WILL END FOR NOW.
IT'S CERTAIN THAT HE WILL TRY TO *ASSERT* HIMSELF EVEN WITHIN OUR KINGDOM'S GOVERNMENT!
BUT HIS POPULARITY AMONGST THE PEOPLE THESE DAYS IS *TREMENDOUS!*
EVEN HIS *MAJESTY* SEEMS TO HAVE AN EXTREME AMOUNT OF CONFIDENCE IN HIM!
HOW COULD SOME *UPSTART KNIGHT* WHO KNOWS NOTHING BUT COMBAT BE ABLE TO GOVERN ANYTHING?!


ACCORDING TO INFORMATION I HAVE OBTAINED, DUE TO THE BAND OF THE HAWK'S SUCCESS IN CAPTURING DOLDREY, HIS MAJESTY PLANS TO *GRANT* GRIFFITH THE POSITION OF *GENERAL*.
INDEED?!
HIS MAJESTY WILL ALSO GRANT THE *WHITE TITLE*, THE *SUPREME RANK OF THE MIDLAND ARMY* SHARED BY THE *WHITE TIGERS* AND *WHITE DRAGONS*, TO HIM AND HIS BAND...
L...
...LUDICROUS!!
IS... IS THAT *CREDIBLE*, MINISTER?!
YES...
IT IS FROM A RELIABLE SOURCE.
HOW COULD THIS BE?!
IN THAT CASE, HIS POLITICAL AUTHORITY WILL INEVITABLY SEE SUBSTANTIAL GROWTH!
THIS MEANS AFTER ALL...

...THAT HE IS A BIT *TOO* BEREFT OF DISCRETION...
...TO SURVIVE WITHIN THE CASTLE.
BUT, MINISTER FOSS...
BY WHAT MEANS SHALL WE...?
!
ANTIARIS.
AN INSTANTLY DEADLY *POISON.* WE WILL PUT THIS IN HIS GOBLET WHILE HE ENJOYS THE VICTORY CELEBRATION.
B-BUT IS THIS REALLY *SAFE?*
WHAT OF THE OFF CHANCE OUR SCHEME COMES TO LIGHT?
YOU *NEEDN'T* WORRY. EVEN IF A MISTAKE IS MADE, SUCH A THING WOULD *NEVER* HAPPEN. FIRST OFF, WE WILL NOT HAVE ANY DIRECT INVOLVEMENT.
B-BUT...
HAVE NO FEAR.

EVEN IF WHAT YOU SUGGEST WERE TO HAPPEN,
I WOULD SEE IT SETTLED PRIVATELY.
I PROMISE IT.
オオ。。
OH MY...
WITH AN ASSURANCE SUCH AS THAT FROM THE QUEEN, WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR.


TAKE HEED, ALL OF YOU. WHILE THIS PLOT WILL ENSURE HEREAFTER THAT THE SECURITY OF YOUR SOCIAL STANDINGS WILL NO LONGER BE *THREATENED* BY THIS MAN...
...IT ALSO EXISTS IN ORDER TO PLUCK THIS PARASITE, WHO WOULD EVENTUALLY *INFECT* EVEN THE RULE OF OUR KINGDOM, FROM THE LION'S BODY BEFORE THE DISEASE SPREADS.
I AM *NOT* ABOUT TO ALLOW THE LONG AND GLORIOUS HISTORY OF MIDLAND'S RULE TO BE TRAMPLED UPON BY THIS LOWLY COMMONER FROM WHO KNOWS WHERE!
FOR THE SAKE OF THE KINGDOM, AND FOR ALL THAT IS *JUST!*
NATURALLY YOU ARE CORRECT.
!!
!!
WE TOO VALUE PATRIOTISM ABOVE ALL.
......
I WAS AWARE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION THAT THE QUEEN AND GENERAL JULIUS WERE INVOLVED IN A LOVE AFFAIR UNBEKNOWNST TO HIS MAJESTY.
IT WAS WISE OF ME TO PLANT THE IDEA THAT GENERAL JULIUS' DEATH WAS A PLOT DESIGNED BY GRIFFITH. BUT TO THINK THAT SHE WOULD GO SO FAR AS TO VOLUNTEER TO LEAD THIS PLAN...

JULIUS......
HIS MAJESTY MADE A GOOD KING BUT NOT A GOOD HUSBAND.
THE BURDEN OF RULING THE KINGDOM MUST WEIGH HEAVILY UPON HIM...
THEREFORE AS ONE MAN, HE HAD NO TIME TO GIVE TO HIS FAMILY.
NO, PERHAPS THAT WAS AN ESCAPE FROM SORROW OVER THE DEATH OF THE FORMER QUEEN, SAID TO BE THE ONE AND ONLY WOMAN HE LOVED......
I HAVE, IN THE SAME WAY PUBLICLY, FAITHFULLY FULFILLED MY ROLE AS HIS MAJESTY'S QUEEN THESE TEN-ODD YEARS.
AS ALL HAD HOPED, UNDER THE GUISE OF A POLITICAL MARRIAGE, I CONVENIENTLY ENTERED THIS KINGDOM AS THE QUEEN OF MIDLAND RATHER THAN THE KING'S WIFE. THAT HAS BEEN MY DISPOSITION TOWARDS MY WEAK-LOVING HUSBAND.

THE REASON I WOULD GIVE MY BODY TO HIM WAS NOT LOVE.
THESE STONE WALLS AND MARBLE FLOORS WERE TOO COLD FOR ME TO ENDURE...
...AS A LONE WOMAN IN AN UNKNOWN FOREIGN LAND.
MORE THAN LOVE...
I WANTED TO SUCCUMB TO A SIMPLE BURNING DESIRE.
BUT NOW THAT IT'S LOST, I FIRST UNDERSTAND...
...JUST HOW MUCH I RESIDED WITHIN THE WARMTH OF THE SKIN OF THAT MAN, WITH WHOM I SHARED NO EMOTION...
...I WAS IN LOVE.
I LOVED HIM.
I WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOU, GRIFFITH...
NOT AS THE QUEEN OF MIDLAND...
...BUT AS A WOMAN WILL I TAKE MY REVENGE!

NOW THEN, EVERYONE.
AS EVIDENCE OF OUR PATRIOTISM AND MUTUAL CONFIDENCE ...
...IF YOU WOULD SEAL THIS BLOOD OATH......

ワ
ワ
ワ
ワ
ワ
ワ
ワ
ワ
GRIFFIIITH!
GRIFFIIITH!
GRIFFIIITH!
OH, WOW!! WERE THERE THIS MANY PEOPLE IN WINDHAM?
ワ
ワ
OO!
HAHH!
ビッ!
シュッ
WHAT'S THAT ABOUT?
オオオオオオ

HULK HOGAN

......
......
STOP THAT!
ワ
ワ
キャッ
キャッ
EEEK!! MISS CASCA!!
LOOK THIS WAY, MISS!!
GIVE ME A BREAK ......
IT'S THE RAIDERS!!
THERE'S CAPTAIN GUTS!!
I HEARD HE BEAT GENERAL BOSCOGN!!
HE'S THE MIGHTIEST WARRIOR IN THE HAWKS!!

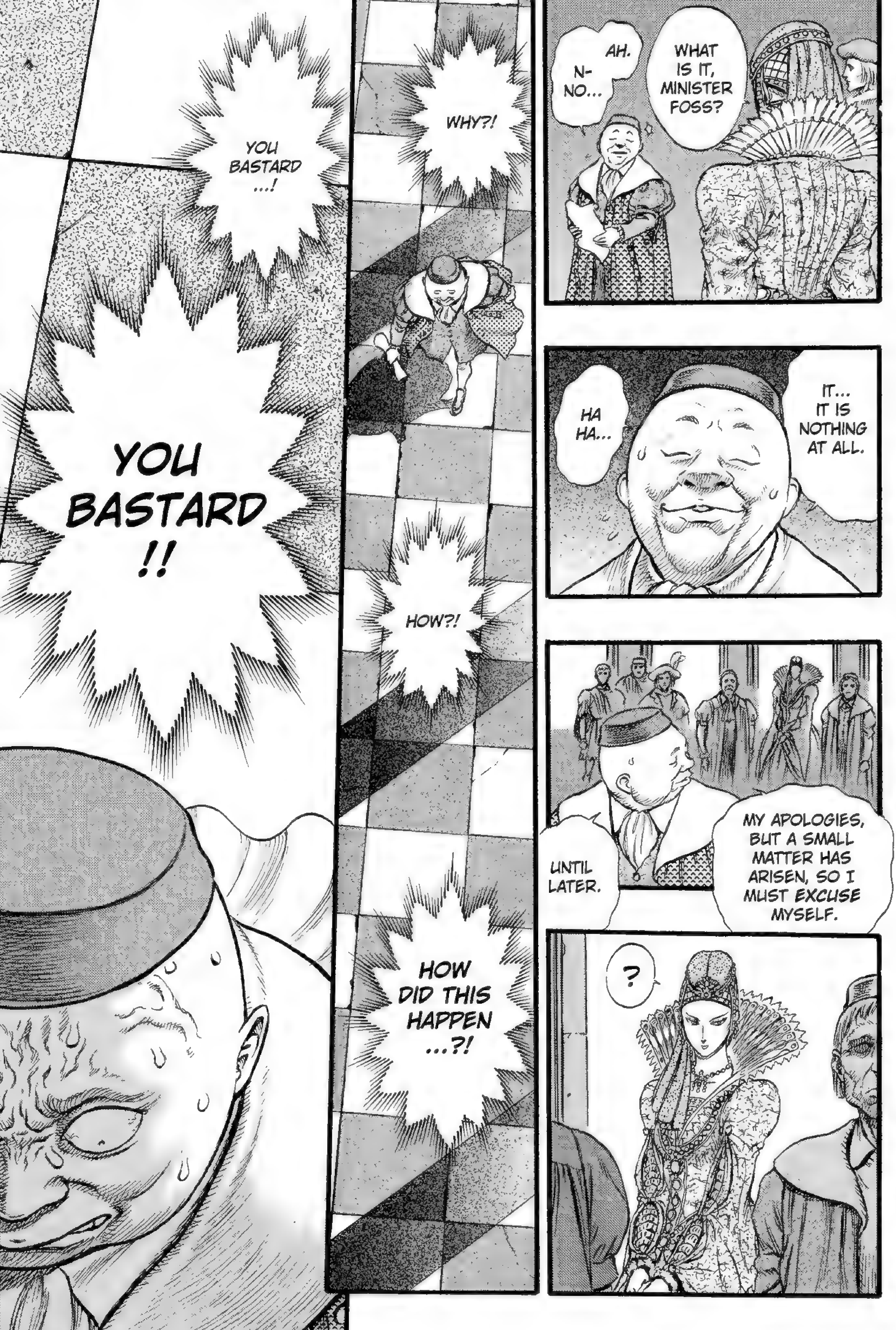
YOU KNOW, NOBODY EVEN *IMAGINED* ALL THIS THREE YEARS AGO.
HOW TRUE THAT IS.
WHY DON'T YOU *TRY* WAVING ONCE, CAPTAIN? YOU'RE THE HERO THIS TIME, AFTER ALL.
THIS IS *AMAZIN'!!* I'VE NEVER SEEN A WELCOME *THIS* BIG FOR A VICTORY!!
CAPTAIN?
EH?
WHAT'S THE MATTER? YOU'RE SPACING OUT... AND YOU LOOK UPSET.
NAH, IT'S NOTHIN'.
NOBODY BUT HIM...
"I WILL GET MY OWN KINGDOM."
...INCREDIBLE.
ABSOLUTELY...

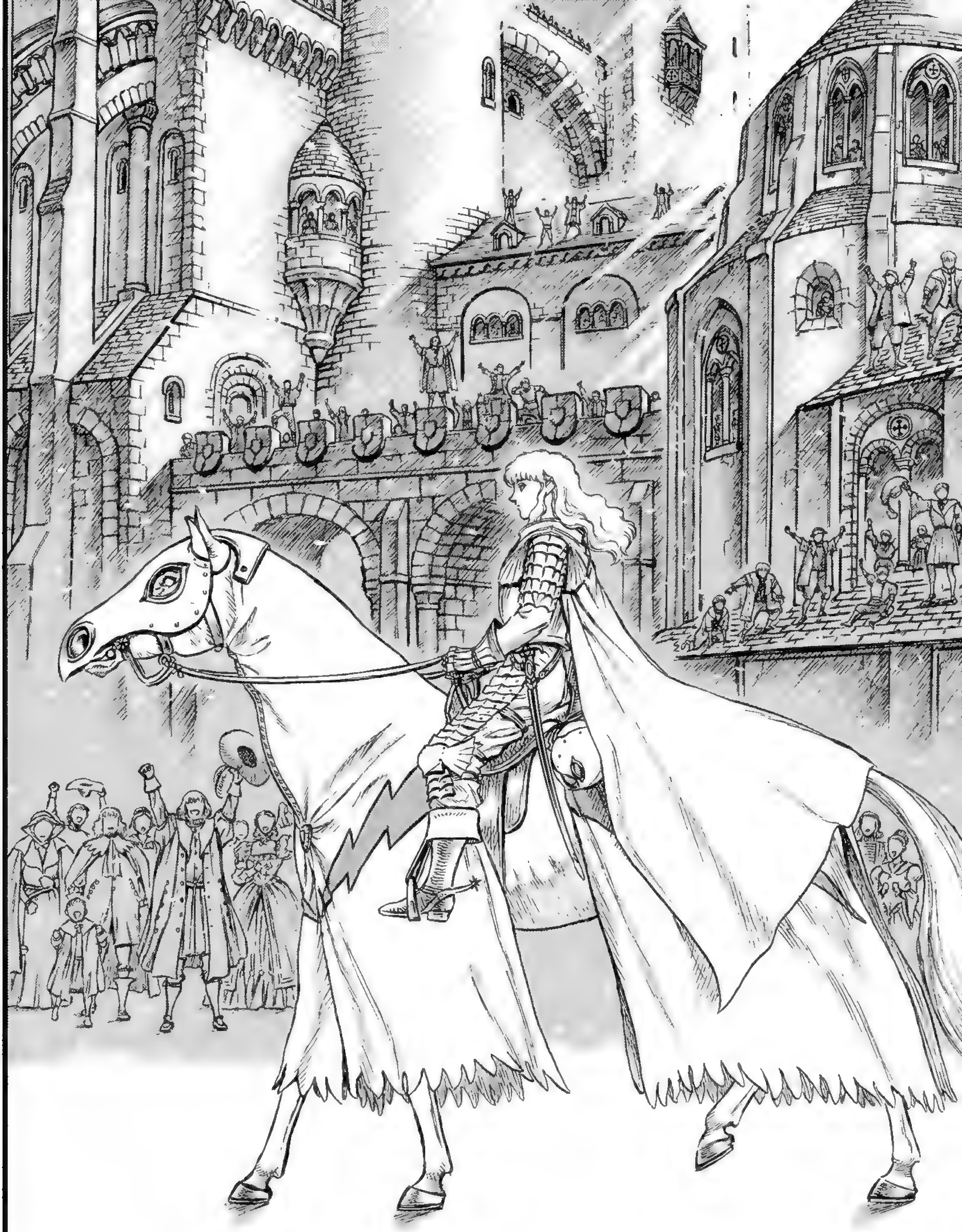
OHHHH! HERE HE COMES!
YOUR HIGHNESS, COME QUICK!
TELL ME, DOES THIS LOOK STRANGE?
NO, IT BECOMES YOU.
THIS IS YOUR FIFTH DRESS NOW, HIGHNESS.
MY, LORD GRIFFITH IS SO POPULAR! THE WOMEN ARE MAKING SUCH A FUSS!
WELL, THEN! THAT'S GETTING A BIT TOO FAMILIAR WITH HIM, I'D SAY!
PLEASE KEEP STILL, YOUR HIGHNESS. YOUR DRESS...
OHHH, HURRY UP!
HURRY, HURRY, HE'S PASSING BY!
AH! WAIT, WAIT!
ワアアアア
!
EEEK!!
ガ
THE PRINCESS CHEERED UP SO SUDDENLY.
AND YET SHE'S HARDLY HAD ANY APPETITE SINCE THE BAND OF THE HAWK WAS DEPLOYED.

LORD GRIFFIIIIITH !!
IT'S *IMPOSSIBLE* AMIDST ALL THIS NOISE. PLEASE WAIT UNTIL THE VICTORY BALL.
OHHHH.
POO.
....!!

……
……
-SIGH-...
HOW GOES THE PLAN?
ALL IS IN PLACE, MAJESTY.
IF EVERYTHING GOES WELL...
...WE SHOULD ALL HOLD A BANQUET. A BANQUET IN *MEMORIAM* OF HIM.

IT'S AN IRONY. THE WHITE HAWK OF THE BATTLEFIELD WILL MEET HIS DEATH WITHIN THE STONE WALLS OF THIS BIRD-CAGE...
ALTHOUGH, HE GETS TO DIE ON THE BEST DAY OF HIS LIFE. THAT, AT LEAST, IS MERCIFUL.
MINISTER FOSS.
WHAT IS IT?!
THIS WAS ADDRESSED ...
...TO YOU, SIR.
A LETTER? FROM WHOM, PRAY TELL.
THE SENDER IS UNKNOWN.
IT WAS SIMPLY PASSED ON TO ME BY A LADY OF THE COURT.
....
WHA... !!


WHAT IS IT, MINISTER FOSS?
AH. N- NO...
IT... IT IS NOTHING AT ALL.
HA HA...
MY APOLOGIES, BUT A SMALL MATTER HAS ARISEN, SO I MUST EXCUSE MYSELF.
UNTIL LATER.
?
WHY?!
HOW?!
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN ...?!
YOU BASTARD ...!
YOU BASTARD !!



TRIUMPHANT RETURN: END

OH! LOOK! LOOK, IT'S LORD GRIFFITH!
A TROUPE FROM THE BAND OF THE HAWK.
THEY WERE THE LEADS IN THIS VICTORY.
THEY'RE MIDLAND'S GUARDIAN DEITIES.
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
パチ
ベルセルク

MOMENT OF GLORY

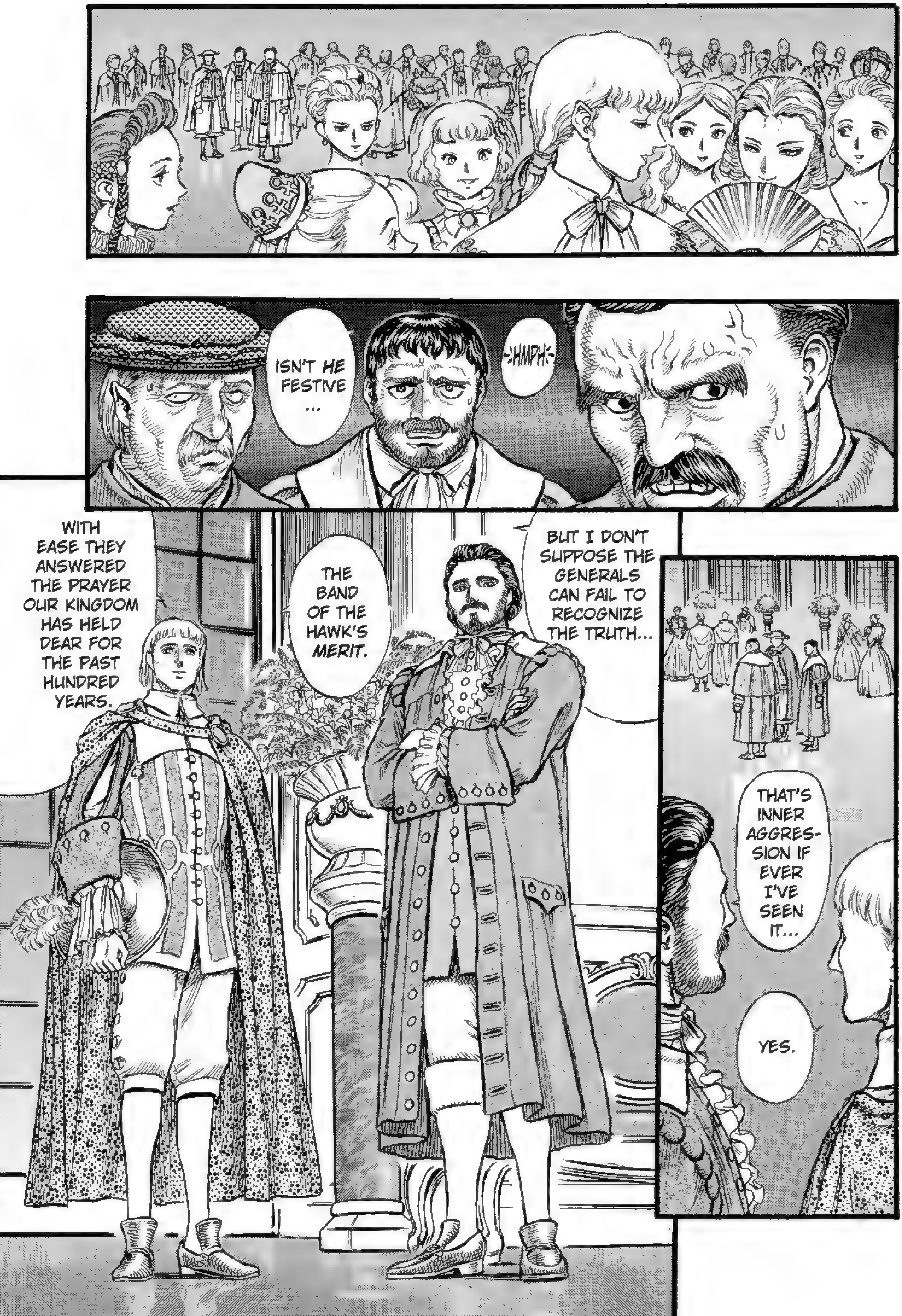
ベルセルク

栄光の瞬間（とき）

AHA, SO *THIS* IS WHERE ALL THE TAX MONEY FROM THE MASSES ENDS UP.
TALK ABOUT SHOWY...
ソワソワ
キョロ キョロ
THIS'S SO EMBARRASSING...
はずかしーなーもー
C'MON, STICK YOUR CHEST OUT! THEY KNOW IF YOU AIN'T SURE OF YOURSELF!
Y'KNOW WHAT, THOUGH...
...IT FEELS LIKE WE'VE FINALLY *MADE IT* HERE.
BUT YOU'RE RIGHT, WE REALLY *HAVE*. TO BE STANDING HERE IN A KIND OF PLACE I'VE ONLY HEARD OF IN FAIRY TALES...
IT'S LIKE I'M DREAMING OR SOMETHING.
IF I *HADN'T* MET UP WITH THE HAWKS... WITH GRIFFITH...
...I NEVER WOULD'VE EVEN *THOUGHT* OF A DREAM LIKE THIS, BEING IN A BIG CASTLE HALL SURROUNDED BY NOBILITY.
YEAH.
YOU SAID IT.

……
……
LORD GRIFFITH!!
ドドド
WEL-COME HOME!
THANK GOOD-NESS YOU'RE SAFE!
I WAS SO WORRIED.
THEY SAY THE BAND OF THE HAWK WAS ACTIVELY INVOLVED AGAIN. DO TELL MORE.
WOULD YOU DANCE WITH ME LATER ON?
ME AS WELL, PLEASE!
AREN'T TALES OF BATTLE RATHER BARBARIC AND BORING FOR LADIES?
NOT AT ALL. THEY'RE STIMULATING!
OH, YES.
HE'S A NATURAL.
AMAZ-ING.
HNNN! SEND AT LEAST ONE THIS WAY!

YOU'RE THE ONE, AREN'T YOU? THE CAPTAIN OF THE RAIDERS WHO BEAT GENERAL BOSCOGN IN SINGLE COMBAT?
YEAH.
WOW!
AND GENERAL BOSCOGN WAS WORLD RENOWNED FOR BEING SUCH A HERO!
OH!
OH!
ワイ
ワイ
ワイ
YOU'RE THE BAND OF THE HAWK'S COMMANDERS.
WE WANT TO HEAR YOUR WAR STORIES.
YOU MUST BE VERY STRONG!
WELLLL, YOU'RE RIGHT, ACTUALLY.
I HEARD YOU ALSO DEFEATED A HUNDRED ENEMIES BY YOURSELF.
YOU REALLY DID THAT?
ワイ
ワイ
ワイ
ワイ
ワイ
YEAH...
UNBELIEVABLE!
ARE YOU THE STRONGEST IN THE BAND OF THE HAWK?
I WONDER WHO IS STRONGER... HIM OR LORD GRIFFITH?
WELLLL, I'M THE ONE WHO TAUGHT HIM THE SWORD, Y'SEE.
BESIDES, HE'S A FAG ANYWAY.
...!!
LET ME TOUCH, LET ME TOUCH.
AMAZING MUSCLES.
THAT'S SELFISH, GUTS.
OH, MY.
HE'S SO CUTE!
YOU GUYS...
...TAKE IT FROM HERE...
YEAH, LEAVE IT TO US!
あ〜ん


-HMPH-
ISN'T *HE* FESTIVE ...
THAT'S INNER AGGRESSION IF EVER I'VE SEEN IT...
YES.
BUT I DON'T SUPPOSE THE GENERALS CAN FAIL TO RECOGNIZE THE TRUTH...
THE BAND OF THE HAWK'S *MERIT.*
WITH EASE THEY ANSWERED THE PRAYER OUR KINGDOM HAS HELD DEAR FOR THE PAST HUNDRED YEARS.

YOU DID WELL TO SPEAK UP FOR HIM. EXCELLENT FORESIGHT, SIR LABAN.
I WOULD STAKE OUT A SHARE MYSELF.
THOSE ARE THE WORDS OF SOME MINISTER OF STATE, SIR OWEN.
BUT...
...HENCEFORTH THAT JUST MAY BE NECESSARY.
THE WAR WILL END. WOULD IT BE THAT THE PEACE WHICH WILL FOLLOW LASTS FOR TIME *IMMEMORIAL*...
BUT FOR BETTER OR WORSE, IN A WORLD OF PEACE, WARRIORS LIKE US WHO LIVE BY THE SWORD MUST ALSO FIND A MEANS OF SURVIVAL WITHIN THIS RESPLENDENT CASTLE.
AND IRONICALLY ENOUGH, THE SAME CAN BE SAID OF THE VERY MAN WHO BROUGHT ABOUT THAT PEACE.
HE IS TOO CONSPICUOUS TO PROCEED PEACEFULLY AND UNEVENTFULLY INSIDE THE CASTLE.
THE MORE *RADIANT* THE LIGHT, THE DARKER THE SHADOWS FALL.

GIMME A FREAKIN' BREAK.
WHAT THE HELL'S THIS FOR?
ふむ ふむ
ペコ
…
スタ スタ
OH?!
ガシィィ
C'MERE !!
H-HEY!! WAIT! WHAT THE--?!
PLAY ALONG!!
PUSHY BROAD!
… EH?

THEY REFUSED TO LEAVE ME ALONE.
PRETEND YOU'RE WITH ME FOR A BIT.
WHOA...
I SWEAR!
WHEN IT COMES TO THOSE ARISTOCRATIC PRODIGAL SONS...
...A FEMALE WARRIOR MUST BE A *RARITY!* TREATING ME LIKE I'M SOME *EXOTIC BEAST!*

......
......
WHAT'S WITH YOU...?
...
...
HUH.
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE INTO--
GAH!!
ガコ。
!
HMMM...
N-NORMAL WOMEN DON'T USE THEIR ELBOWS!
クス クス クス
AH!
I BIT MY TONGUE!
OWW...
COME ON! THIS'S EMBARRASSING.
S'YOUR FAULT Y'KNOW.

~WHEWWWWW~. I'M NO GOOD AT THIS. I'M MUCH MORE COMFORTABLE SWINGING A SWORD!
YOU SAID IT.
WHAT THE HECK HAPPENED TO YOU, THOUGH?
WHAT MADE BIG SIS CASCA THE DEMON GO FLUTTERING AROUND LIKE THIS?
CUT THE "DEMON."
I ONLY DRESS LIKE A MAN BECAUSE IT'S EASIER TO MOVE AROUND! IT'S NOT LIKE I DO IT FOR KICKS!
BUT I GUESS I SHOULDN'T TRY THINGS I'M NOT USED TO. REVEALING CLOTHES LIKE THIS MAKE ME FEEL I'LL CATCH A COLD.
THINKING ABOUT IT, IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I LAST WORE A SKIRT... AND I'M SO MUCH MORE MUSCULAR NOW.
......
DOES IT LOOK WEIRD...
...YOU THINK?
NAH, NOT A BIT.
YOU LOOK PRETTY GOOD.

REALLY?
YEAH, YOU LOOK A LOT BETTER THAN THOSE NOBLE GIRLS FLOCKIN' AROUND GRIFFITH.
I'VE ONLY EVER DANCED AT MY VILLAGE FESTIVAL WHEN I WAS A CHILD...
I'D PROBABLY STEP ON HIS FEET.
HOW 'BOUT IT?
WHY NOT ASK HIM FOR A DANCE?
N-NO WAY.
I COULDN'T.
BUT WHAT HAPPENED THAT CHANGED YOUR ATTITUDE?
YOU'VE NEVER SHOWN YOUR FACE IN A PLACE LIKE THIS.
......
......
I THOUGHT I'D SEE IT FOR MYSELF ......
... HUH?

EVERYTHING GRIFFITH, MYSELF, AND EVERYONE ELSE HAS DONE...
...THESE PAST THREE YEARS SINCE I MET YOU ALL...
ALL THE THINGS HE'S MANAGED TO GET SO FAR...
...AND ALL HE'S GOING TO TRY TO GET FROM HERE ON OUT...
...I THOUGHT I'D COME SEE IT WITH MY OWN EYES.
GUTS...
SO...
...YOU'RE REALLY SERIOUS?

NO MATTER WHAT?
ワァ. ァァァ. ァァ.
!
オオ
LONG LIVE HIS MAJESTY, THE KING!!
オオ

THE SPONSORS APPEAR.
YOU GO ON AHEAD.
I'M GONNA ENJOY THE AIR A BIT MORE. CAN'T *STAND* LISTENING TO THE KING DRONE ON.
......
......
DON'T BE LONG.
YOU GOT IT.
HANG ON.
EH?
NAH.
NEVER MIND.

AIN'T THAT A LITTLE CRUEL, GRIFFITH?
THERE'S ONE MORE REASON I SHOWED UP TONIGHT.
...WHAT'S IN THE WORKS HERE TONIGHT.
SHE AND THE REST OF THE HAWKS DON'T HAVE A CLUE...
FIRST AND FOREMOST, WE HAVE GOOD NEWS FOR ALL OF YOU.
A SHORT WHILE AGO, A SPECIAL ENVOY FROM CHUDER BROUGHT WORD THAT AN ARMISTICE AGREEMENT WITH OUR KINGDOM HAS BEEN SIGNED.

WE THANK FROM OUR HEARTS ALL THOSE WHO HAVE ENDURED THIS LENGTHY TIME OF TRIAL ALONG WITH US.
THERE ARE MORE THAN A FEW WHO SPEAK OUT IN OPPOSITION TO THIS ARMISTICE.
HATRED OF CHUDER AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE LOST FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES TO THE WAR HAS NO DOUBT PERSISTED FOR THREE GENERATIONS.
WE SINCERELY SYMPATHIZE WITH THEM.
HOWEVER, THE REBUILDING OF OUR WEARIED KINGDOM IS FAR MORE URGENT.
キョロ
キョロ
HEREAFTER, WE MUST FOCUS THAT STRENGTH TOWARDS OUR KINGDOM'S PROSPERITY.
....
!
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ソワ
......
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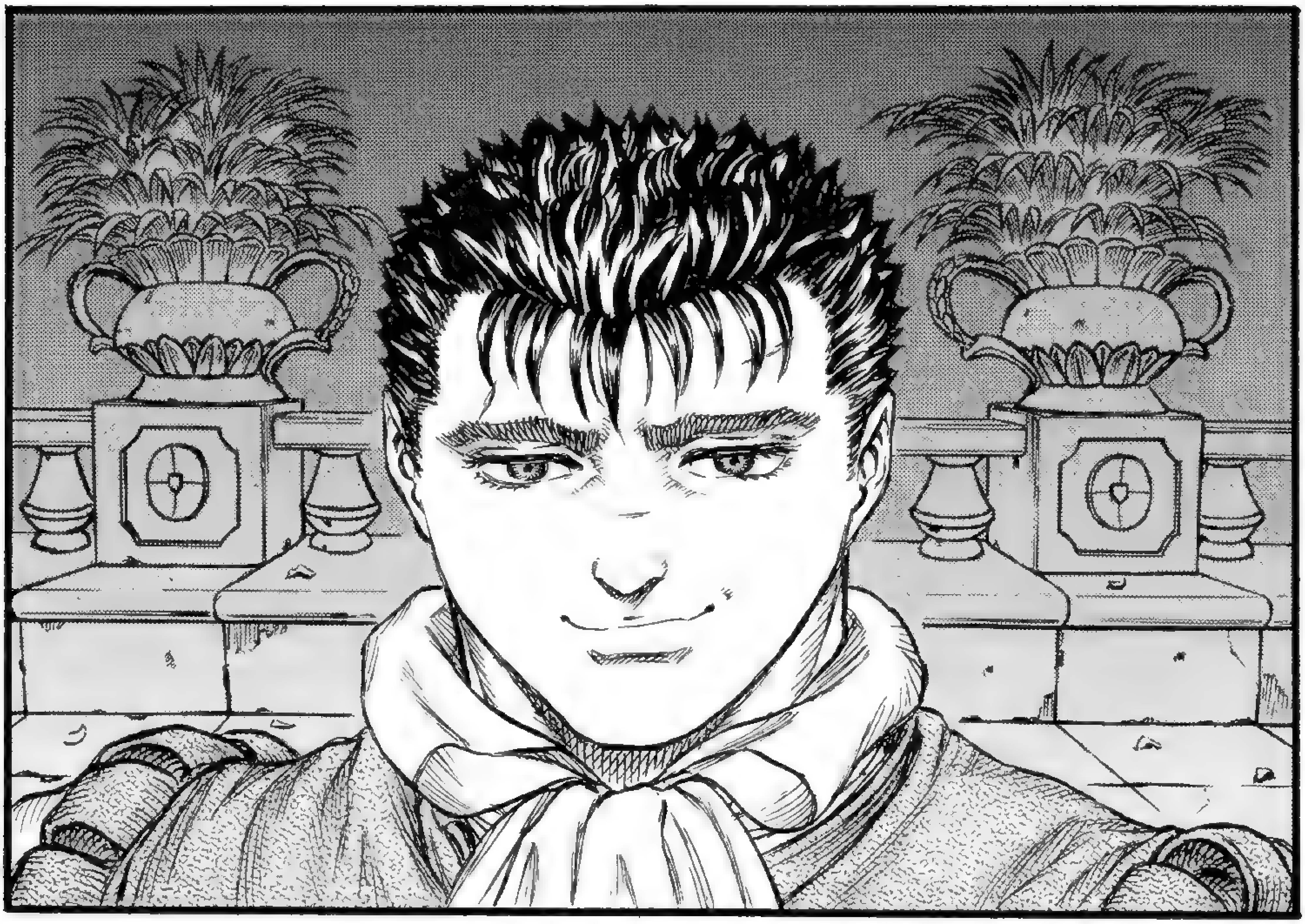
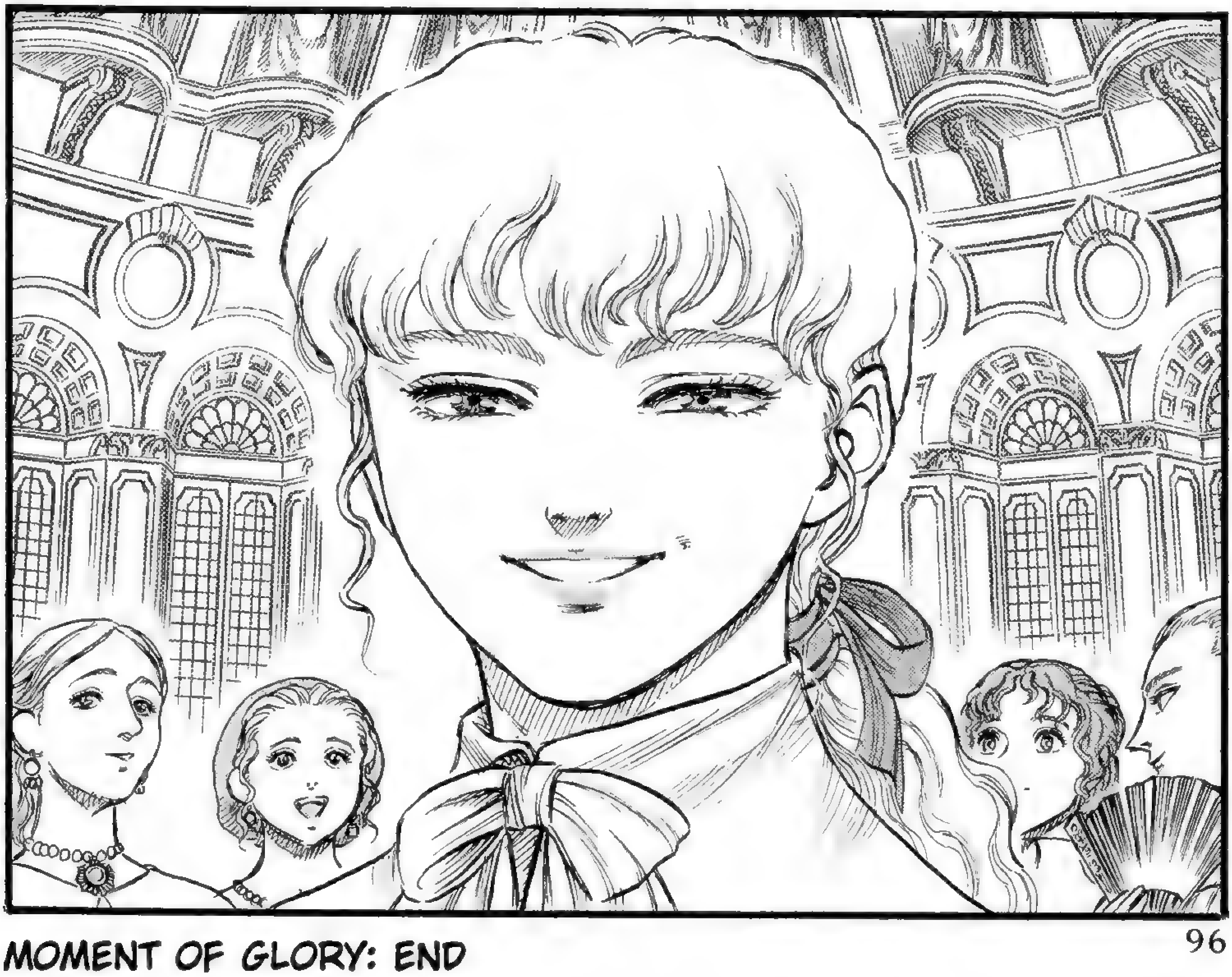
ワキ

IT HAS CONTINUED TO BE SAID THESE HUNDRED YEARS THAT THE CAPTURE OF DOLDREY WAS *IMPOSSIBLE*, BUT WITH THEIR BOLD, UNIQUE BRAND OF VALOR THEY HAVE FINALLY ACCOMPLISHED IT.
AS YOU ALL KNOW, THE *BAND OF THE HAWK* LED BY *COUNT GRIFFITH* DEMONSTRATED EXCEEDINGLY GREAT MERIT LEADING TO THIS ARMISTICE.
THE RECAPTURE OF TERRITORY HAS BEEN OUR KINGDOM'S MOST FERVENT PRAYER SINCE THE DAYS OF TWO KINGS PRIOR.
OH!
HE'S TALKIN' ABOUT US.
AT THE MILITARY AWARD CEREMONY TWO DAYS HENCE...
...WE PLAN TO PRESENT COUNT GRIFFITH AND THE BAND OF THE HAWK WITH THE MIDLAND ARMY'S...
...HIGHEST ENNOBLEMENT, THE *WHITE* TITLE.
THIS IS A BIT HASTY OF US, BUT IT IS A TIME FOR CELEBRATION AND THUS WE SHALL INFORM ALL OF YOU.
EXCUSE ME, PLEASE LET ME THROUGH.
SHE'S THE HAWKS' LADY COMMANDER.
MY, MY.

PERHAPS APPROPRIATELY...
...AS THE WHITE PHOENIX GENERAL GRIFFITH AND THE WHITE PHOENIX KNIGHTS.
ALSO WE SHALL BEKNIGHT ALL OF THE BAND OF THE HAWK'S CURRENT UNIT COMMANDERS WITHOUT EXCEPTION AND RAISE THEM TO THE PEERAGE.
THE WHITE PHOENIX GENERAL!!
HE SAID THE WHITE PHOENIX KNIGHTS!
パチ パチ パチ パチ
FANTASTIC!!!
THAT'S WONDERFUL!!
オオオオオオ
WHITE PHOENIX GENERAL GRIFFITH!!

パチ パチ パチ パチ パチ パチ パチ パチ パチ パチ
ワァァァァァァァァ
パチ パチ パチ
I-I DON'T BELIEVE IT...
W-WE'RE GONNA BE NOBLES.





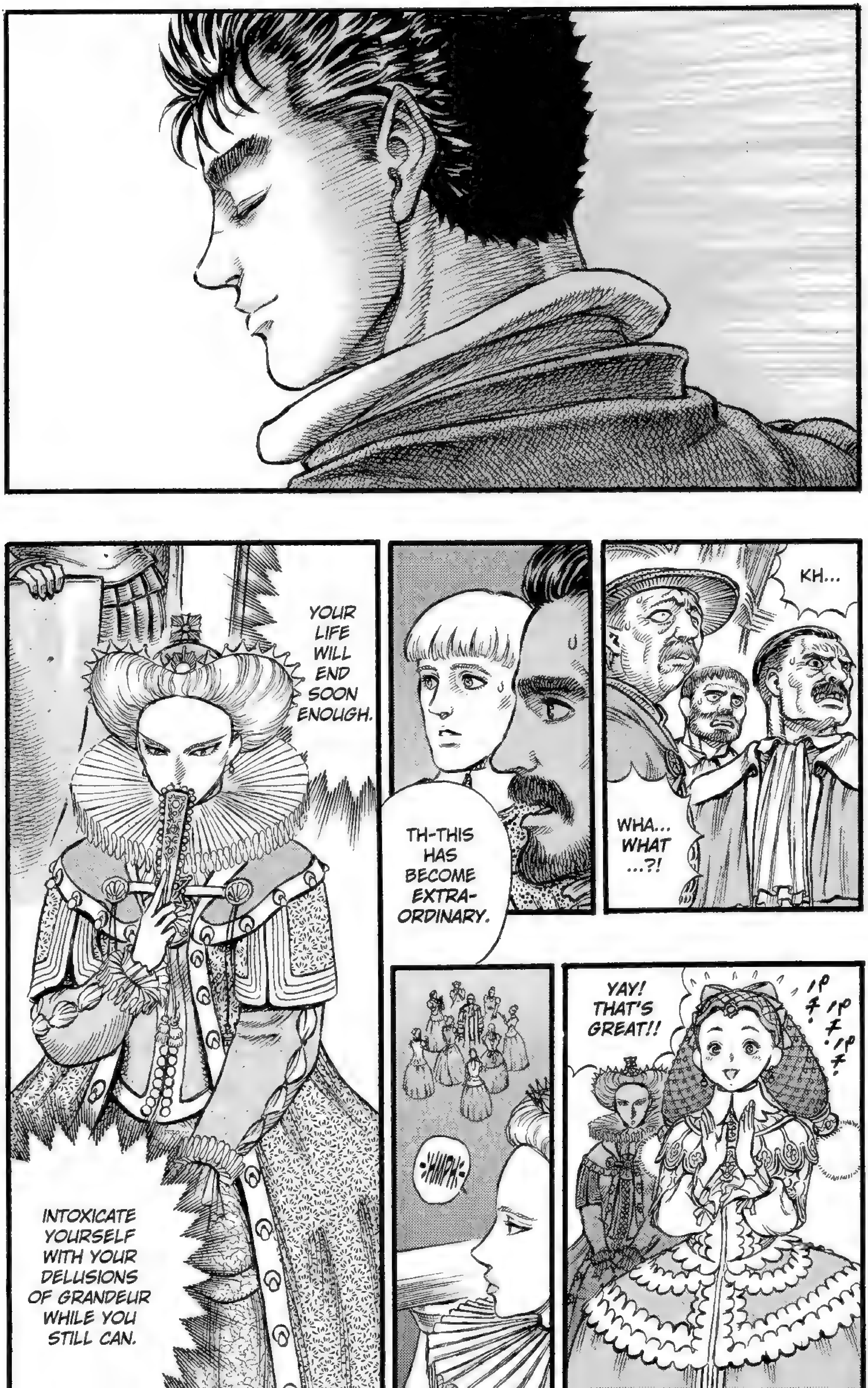
MOMENT OF GLORY: END

THE WHITE PHOENIX KNIGHTS!!
WHITE PHOENIX GENERAL GRIFFITH!!

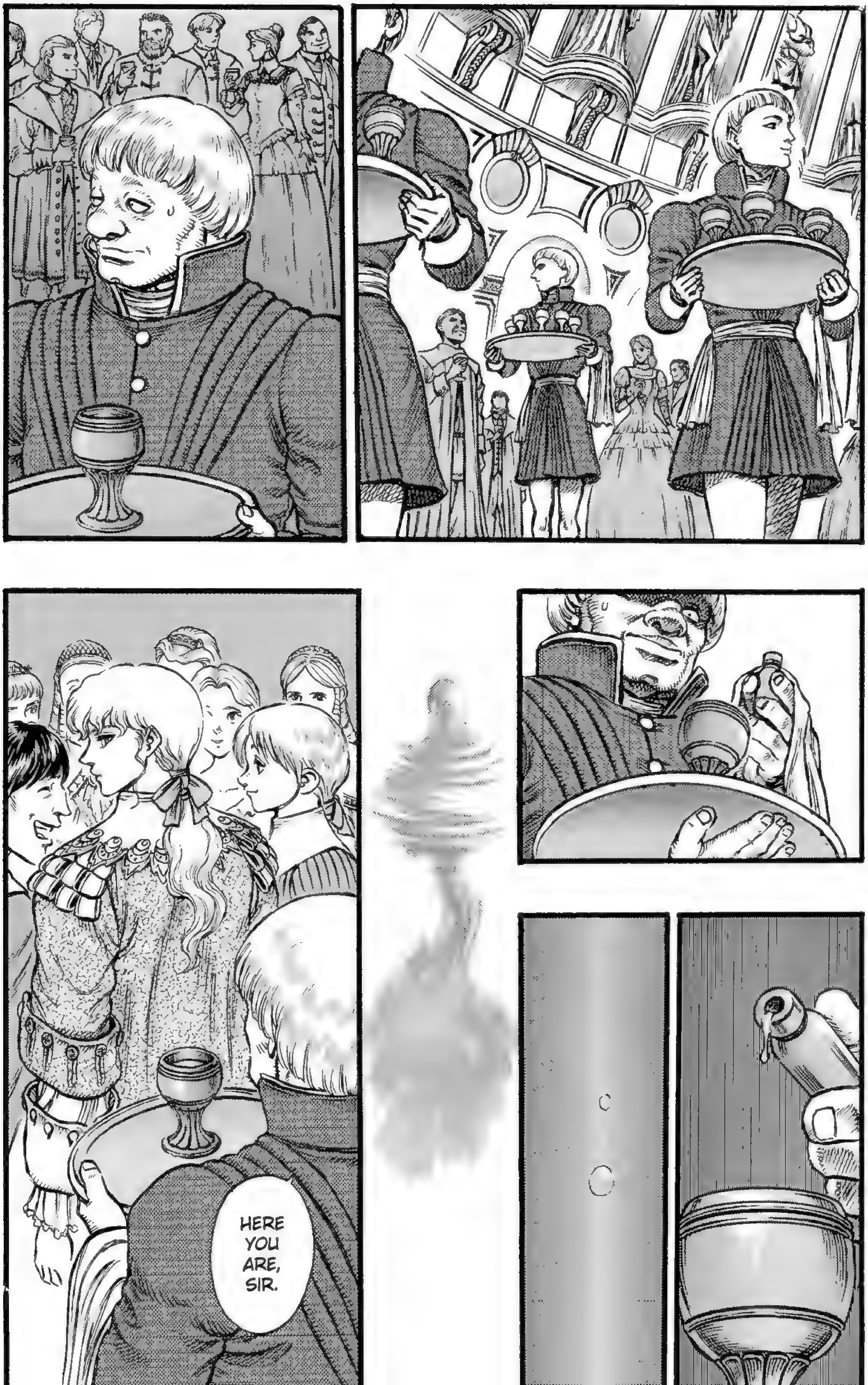
ベルセルク

TOMBSTONE OF FLAME, CHAPTER 1

炎の墓標(1)


KH...
WHA... WHAT ...?!
TH-THIS HAS BECOME EXTRA-ORDINARY.
YAY! THAT'S GREAT!!
パチ パチ パチ パチ
HMPH
YOUR LIFE WILL END SOON ENOUGH.
INTOXICATE YOURSELF WITH YOUR DELUSIONS OF GRANDEUR WHILE YOU STILL CAN.

......
......
IT'S ABOUT THAT TIME... MINISTER FOSS...
WHATEVER IS THE MATTER? YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE YOU FEEL WELL.
HA...?
THAT ISN'T LIKE YOU. CERTAINLY YOU AREN'T AFRAID NOW?
NO, IT'S NOT THAT.
PLEASE, PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER.
......
......

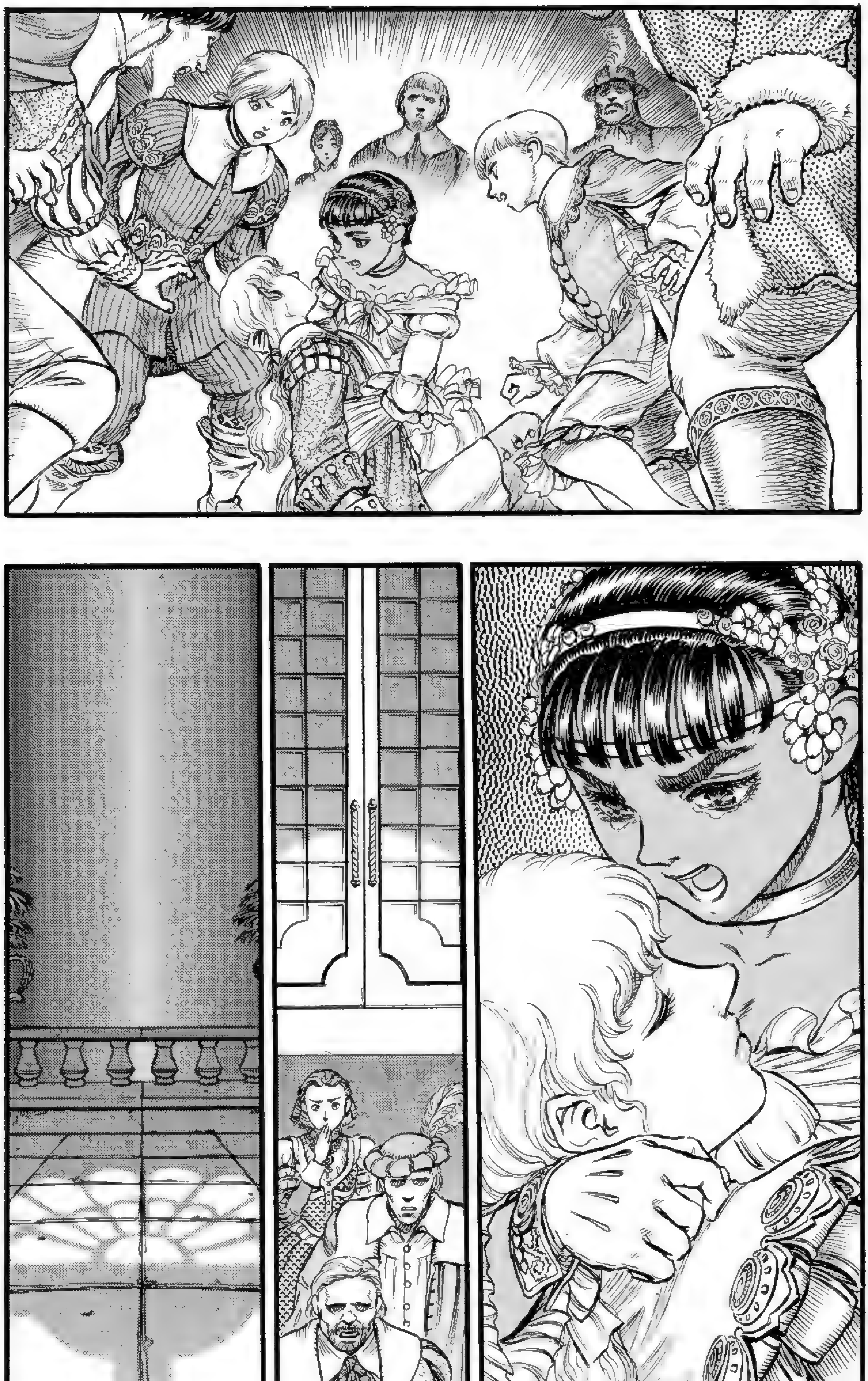

HERE YOU ARE, SIR.

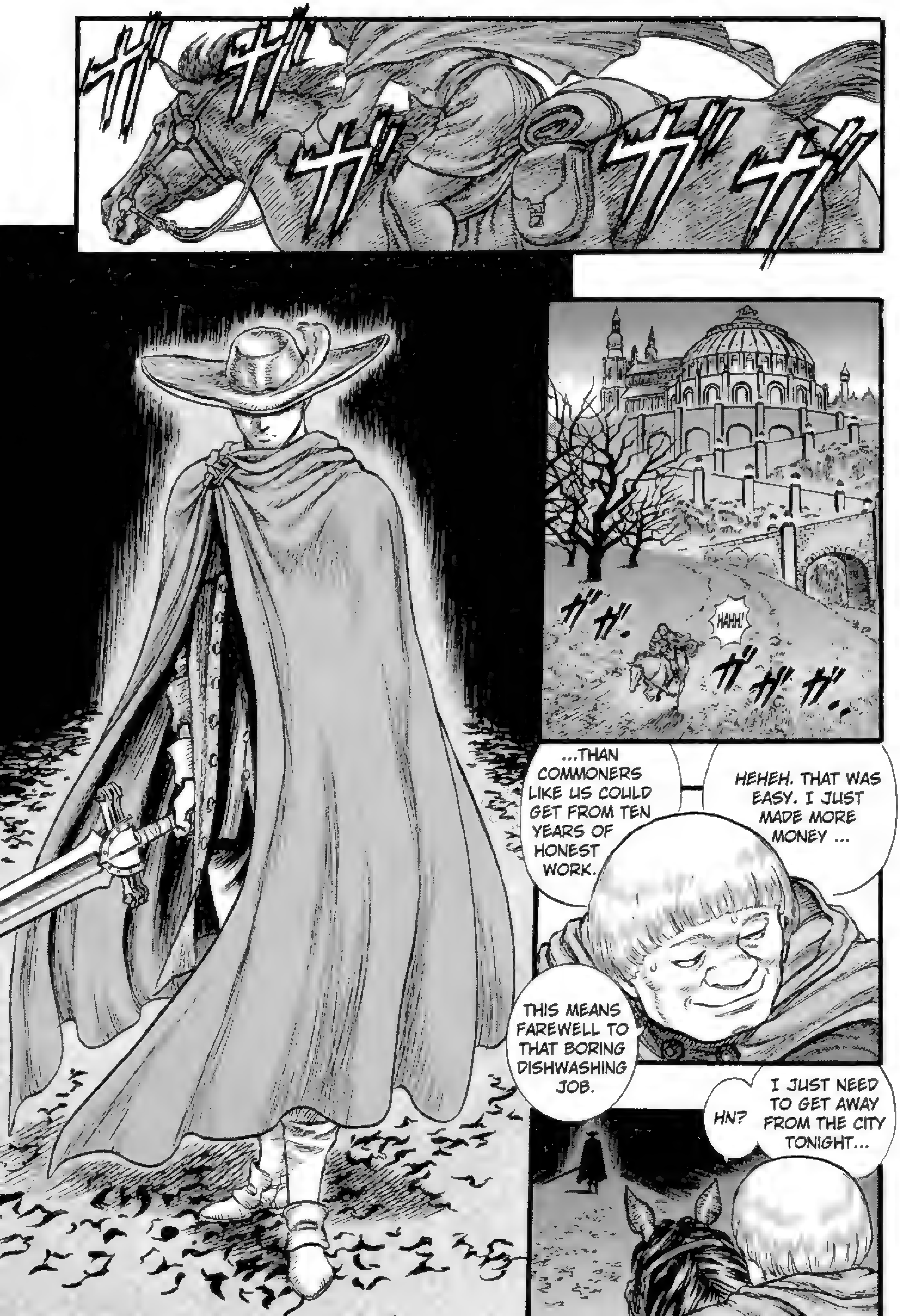
……
THANK YOU.
NOW THEN, TO THE BIRTH OF OUR YOUNG NEW HEROES...
...AND TO THE SHINING FUTURE OF *MIDLAND.*
LET ME THROUGH ...

A TOAST.
GRIFFI --

GRI... FFITH...?
GRIFFITH!

ウオオ
フラ…
HIGHNESS!!
CHARLOTTE?!
!
ペタン…
GUARDS!!
SEAL THE HALL!!
DON'T LET ANYONE OUT!
オオオ
……
……
オオオ

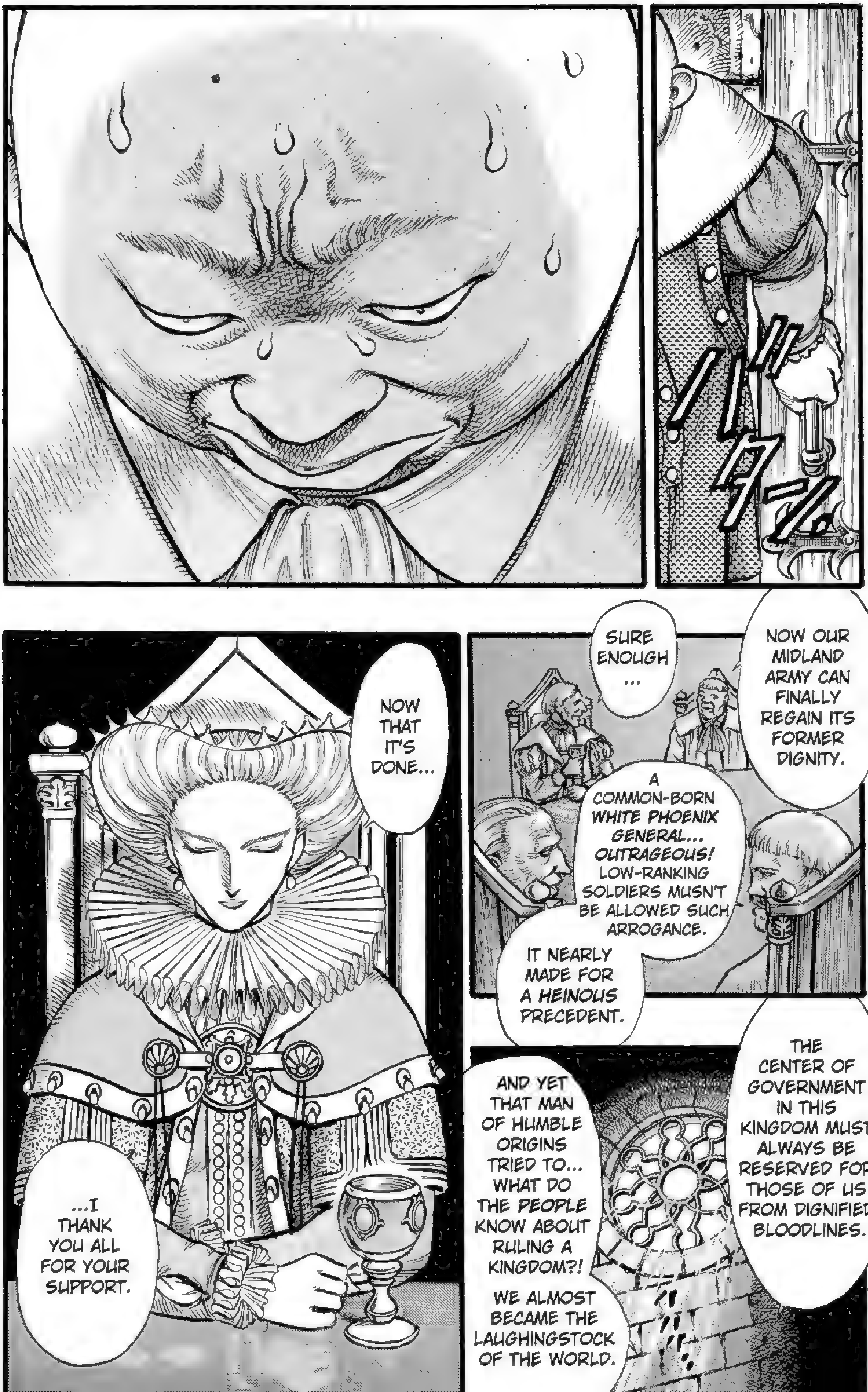


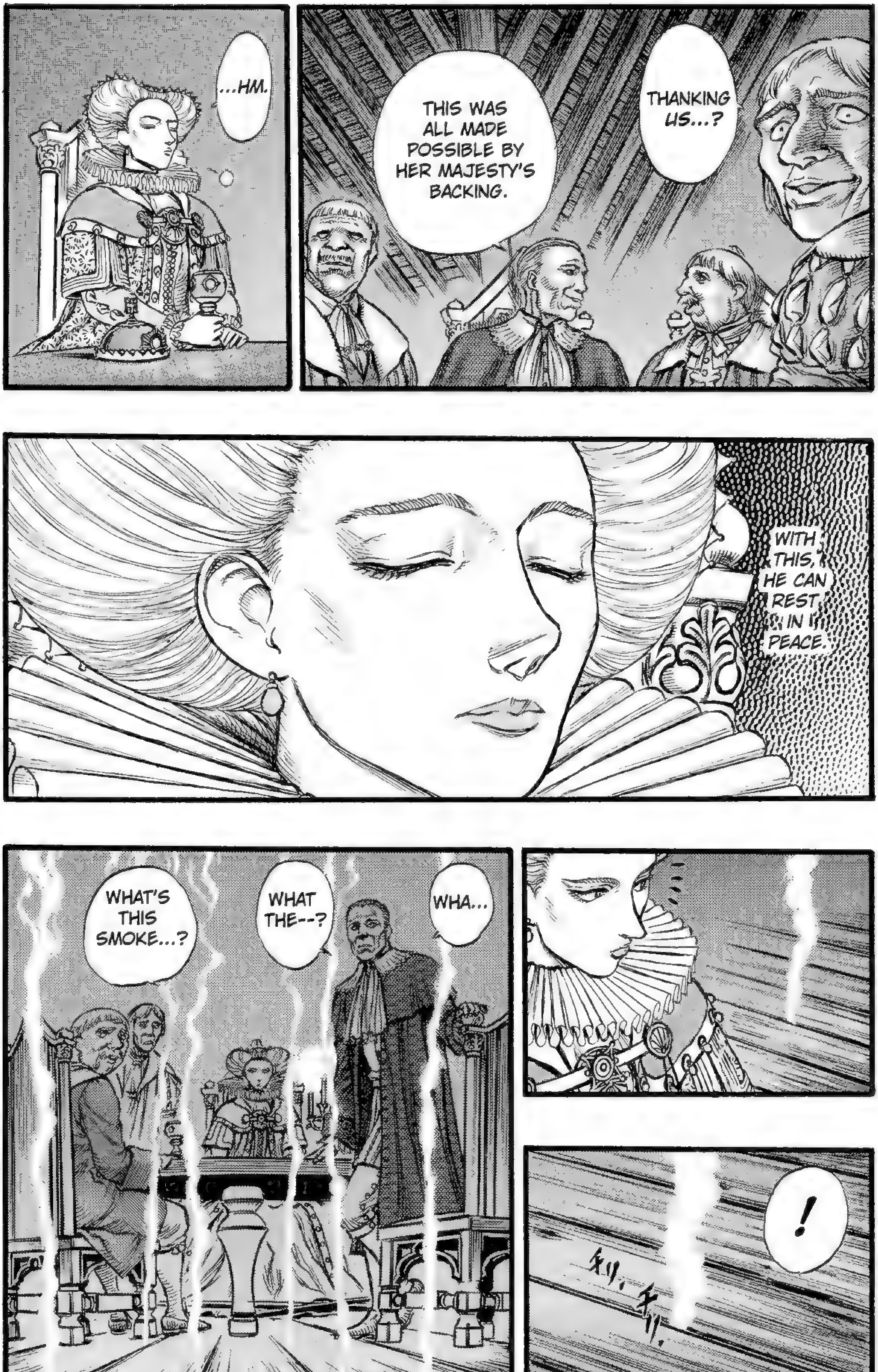

ガッ ガッ ガッ ガッ ガッ
ガッ ガッ
HAHH!
ガッ ガッ ガッ
HEHEH. THAT WAS EASY. I JUST MADE MORE MONEY ...
...THAN COMMONERS LIKE US COULD GET FROM TEN YEARS OF HONEST WORK.
THIS MEANS FAREWELL TO THAT BORING DISHWASHING JOB.
I JUST NEED TO GET AWAY FROM THE CITY TONIGHT...
HN?

ビュオッ
ザッ
ドゥン
ガガガガ

ウゥ‥ウゥ‥
ビュウゥ‥
I NEVER EXPECTED THINGS TO PROCEED SO WELL...
IT SEEMED TOO EASY.
EVERYTHING WENT ACCORDING TO MINISTER FOSS' ARRANGEMENTS.
YOUR SKILLS ARE MOST IMPRESSIVE.
NO, NOT AT ALL...
YES, IT WAS IMPRESSIVE, MINISTER FOSS.

AH...I AM GRATEFUL.
WHAT'S WRONG?
YOUR FACE IS PALE.
IT...
...IT MUST BE YOUR IMAGINATION.
A TRICK OF THE CANDLE-LIGHT.
BUT WE REALLY ARE SAFE, YES? WHAT OF THE SLIM CHANCE THAT SERVER IS CAUGHT AND SPEAKS OF IT?
OUR NAMES WOULD BE MADE PUBLIC.
YOU NEEDN'T WORRY OVER THAT POINT.
A LITTLE WHILE AGO A REPORT CAME IN...
...FROM ONE OF MY SUBORD-INATES THAT HE HAD BEEN DISPOSED OF...
OHH! THEN...
...YOU'VE TAKEN CARE OF ALL THE LOOSE ENDS...
WHAT A TACTICIAN! THE MINISTER WAS OVERQUALIFIED FOR THIS.
WELL, THEN...
I SHALL GO CHECK ON THE PANDE-MONIUM.

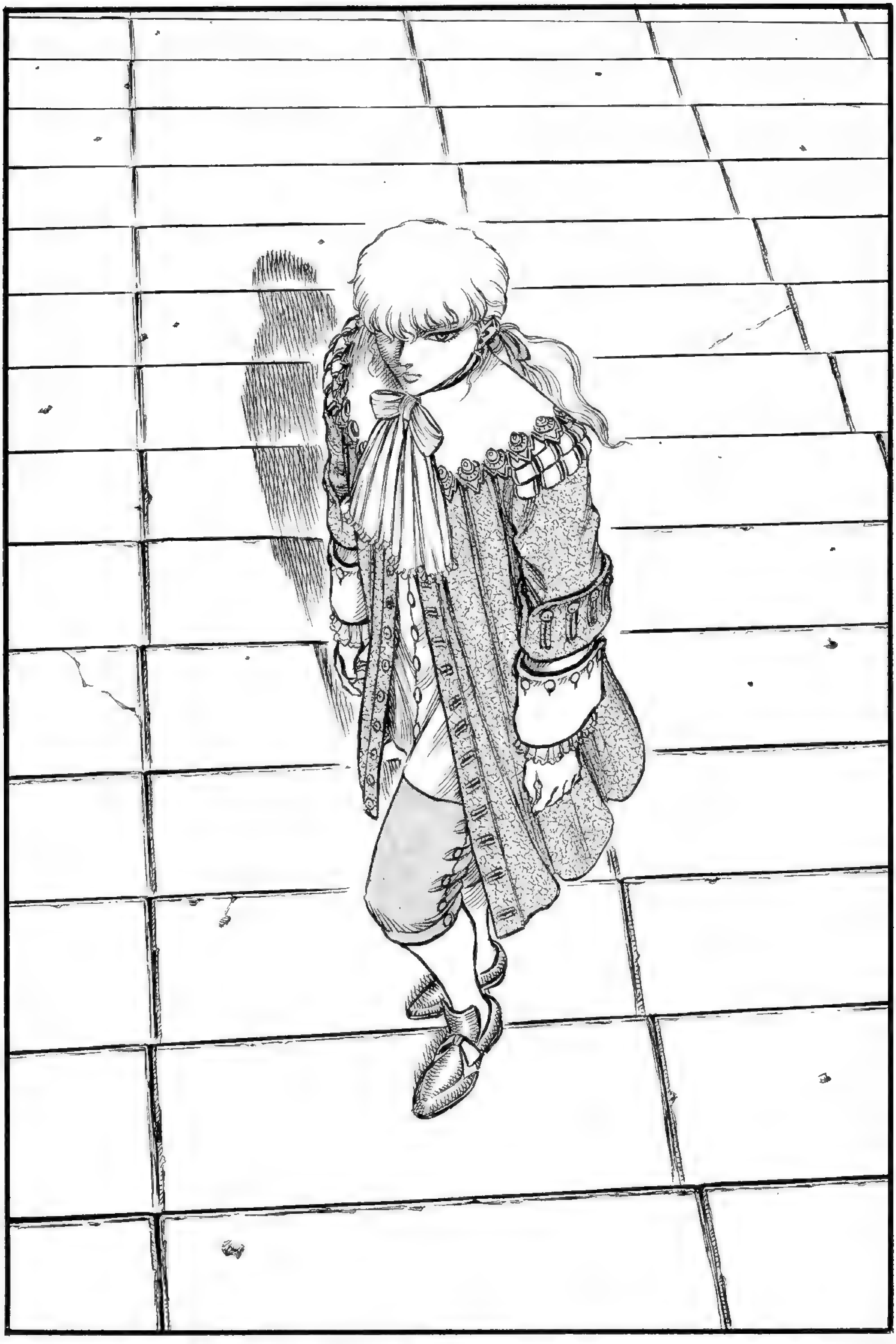

バタン
NOW OUR MIDLAND ARMY CAN FINALLY REGAIN ITS FORMER DIGNITY.
SURE ENOUGH...
A COMMON-BORN *WHITE PHOENIX GENERAL*... *OUTRAGEOUS!* LOW-RANKING SOLDIERS MUSN'T BE ALLOWED SUCH ARROGANCE.
IT NEARLY MADE FOR A *HEINOUS* PRECEDENT.
THE CENTER OF GOVERNMENT IN THIS KINGDOM MUST ALWAYS BE RESERVED FOR THOSE OF US FROM DIGNIFIED BLOODLINES.
AND YET THAT MAN OF HUMBLE ORIGINS TRIED TO... WHAT DO THE *PEOPLE* KNOW ABOUT RULING A KINGDOM?!
WE ALMOST BECAME THE LAUGHINGSTOCK OF THE WORLD.
NOW THAT IT'S DONE...
...I THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT.


THANKING US...?
THIS WAS ALL MADE POSSIBLE BY HER MAJESTY'S BACKING.
...HM.
WITH THIS, HE CAN REST IN PEACE.
!
チリ、チリ
WHA...
WHAT THE--?
WHAT'S THIS SMOKE...?

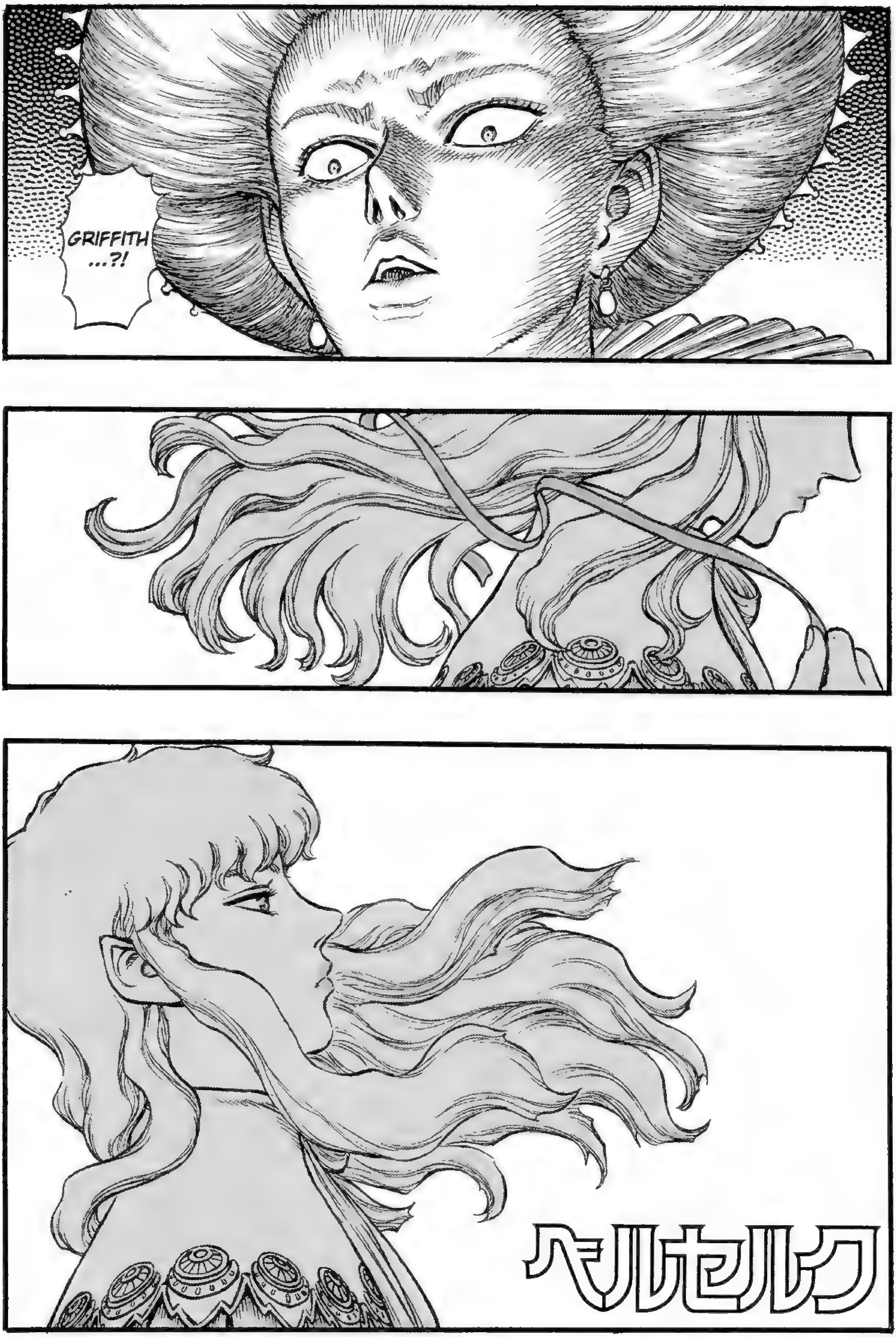
S... SOMETHING'S BEEN PUSHED AGAINST THE DOOR ON THE OUTSIDE, AND IT WON'T *BUDGE!*
WHAT?!
HN...!
M-MOVE ASIDE!
!!

YEEEEE!!
F-
FIRE?!
ボォオオ・オ・
WHA...
WHAT IS THIS ...?!
ダッ。
.....
...!!
ザッ!
!
ゴォオオオ。

WHA...
WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS...?!
ゴゴゴゴゴゴ



TOMBSTONE OF FLAME (1): END


GRIFFITH …?!
ベルセルク

ベルセルク

炎の墓標(2)

TOMBSTONE OF FLAME, CHAPTER 2

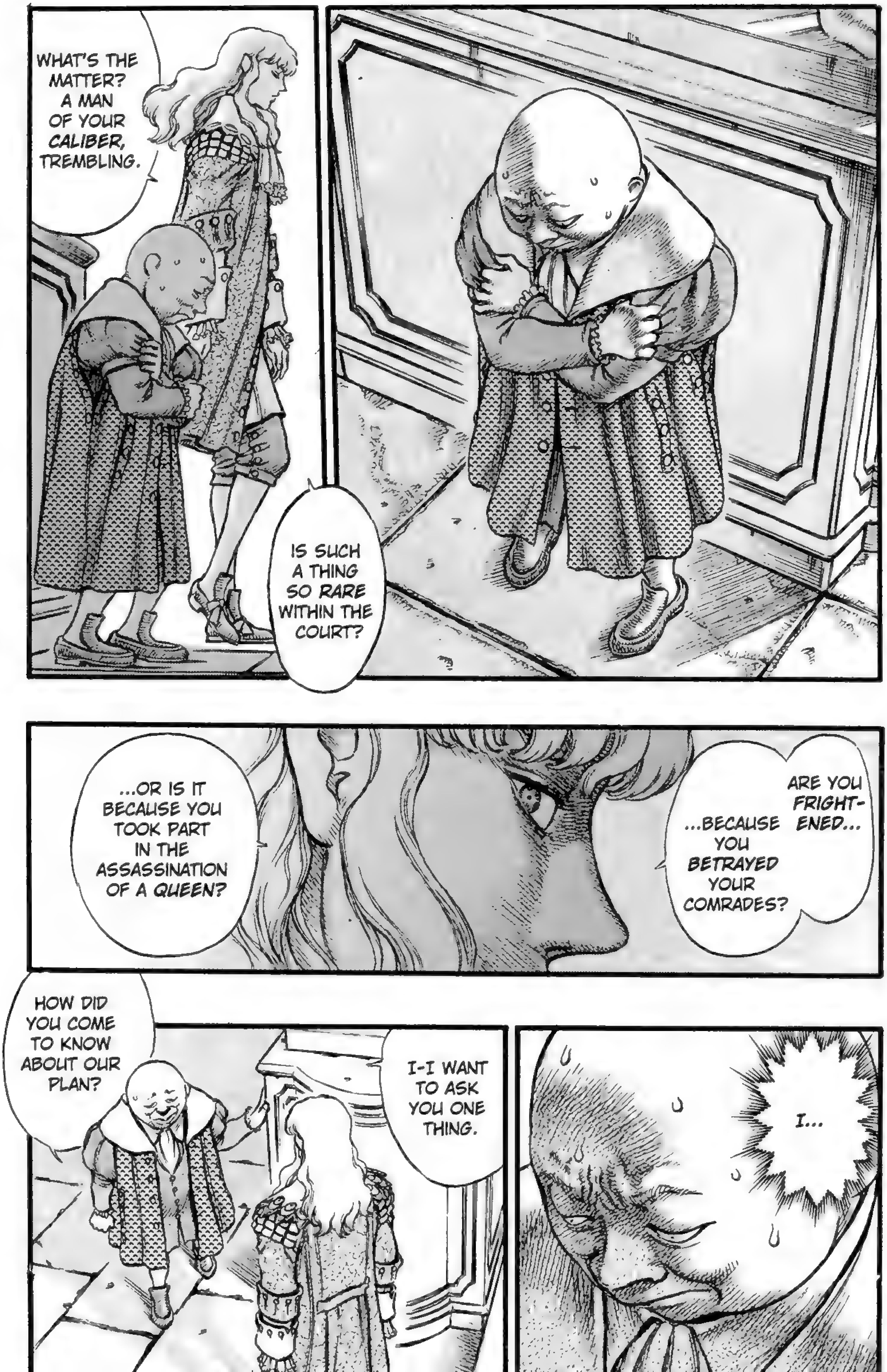
H-HOW...?!
THE DOCTORS WERE SURE YOU WERE DEAD!!
AND I'M SURE IT SEEMED THAT WAY.
THAT'S HOW I ARRANGED IT.
IT WAS NOT POISON THAT PASSED MY LIPS.
IT WAS A NOSTRUM, A HYOSCYAMUS-BASED MIXTURE THAT PUT ME IN A TEMPORARY STASIS CLOSE TO DEATH.
NATURALLY, IF I HAD TAKEN A FATAL DOSE I REALLY WOULD HAVE DIED...
BUT IT WAS WORTH THE RISK.
THANKS TO IT, I WAS ABLE TO DEAL WITH ALL OF YOU AT ONCE.

IN ANY CASE, IT SEEMS...
...ALL OF YOU ARE TOO ACCUSTOMED TO SCHEMING OVER THINGS FROM BEHIND YOUR DESKS.
I WAS SIMPLY CALLED UPON BY HER MAJESTY AND MINISTER FOSS!! I HAD NO DIRECT INVOLVEMENT IN IT!!
S-SPARE ME!!
SILENCE, YOU FOOL!!
THIS IS WAR.
THERE ARE NO SPECTATOR SEATS ON THE BATTLEFIELD.
AIIEE..
グワァア..
DAMN YOU, GRIFFITH!!
DAMN YOU...

ゴオオオオオ
SO, YOU MEAN TO *KILL ME?!* JUST LIKE YOU KILLED *JULIUS!!*
A MERE COMMONER LIKE *YOU* IS GOING TO BURN ME, THE QUEEN OF MIDLAND, TO *DEATH?!*
I WON'T ALLOW IT...
I WON'T ACKNOWLEDGE IT!!!
THOSE WHO DIE ON THE BATTLEFIELD ARE NOT ROYALTY, NOBILITY, OR COMMONERS.
THEY ARE THE *DEFEATED* WHO DIE.

バキ
バキ
ヒィィィィ
!
ドドドドド
ドオオオオッ

ゴゴゴゴ
IT IS OVER.

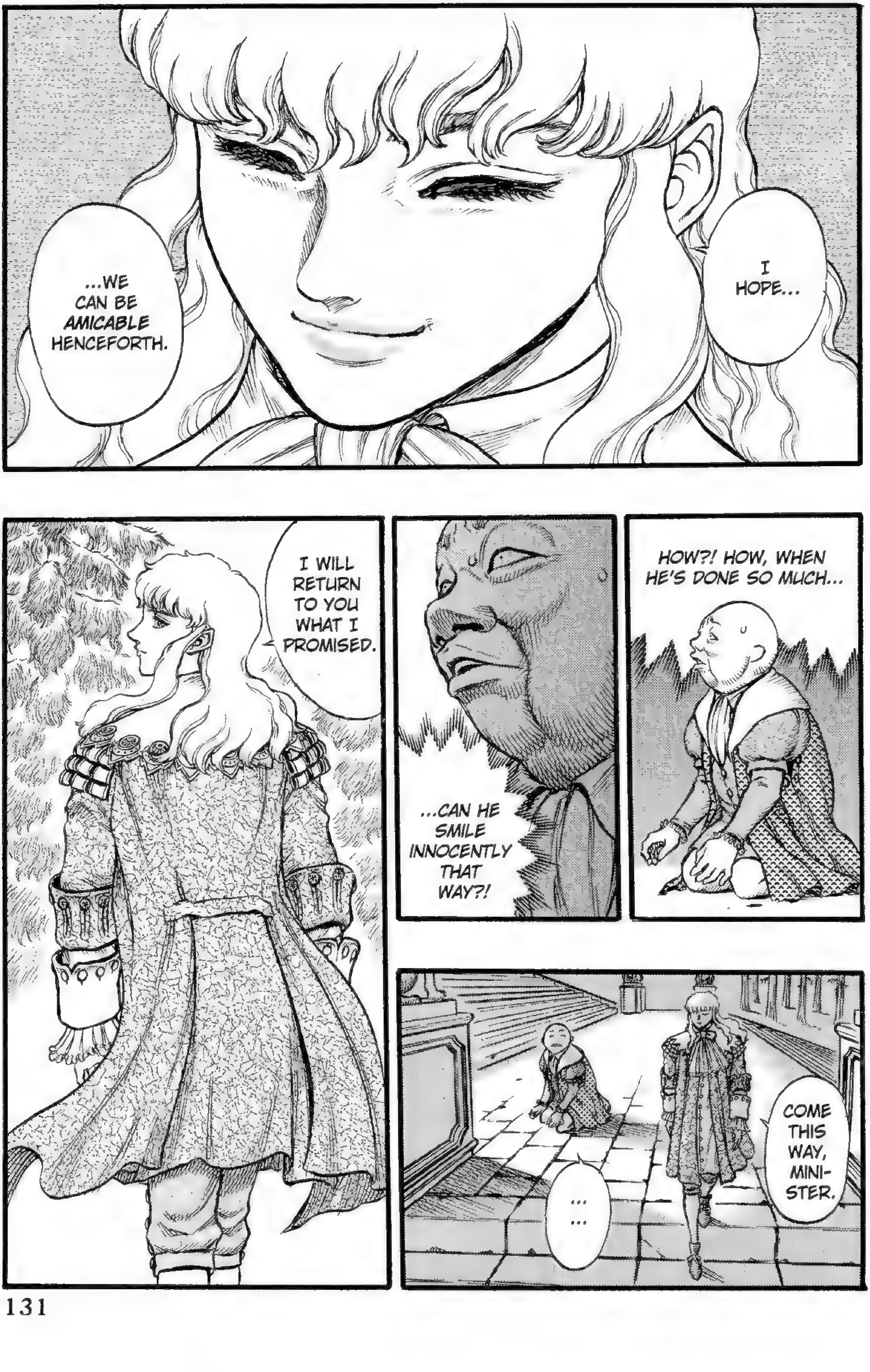

WHAT'S THE MATTER? A MAN OF YOUR CALIBER, TREMBLING.
IS SUCH A THING SO RARE WITHIN THE COURT?
ARE YOU FRIGHTENED...
...BECAUSE YOU BETRAYED YOUR COMRADES?
...OR IS IT BECAUSE YOU TOOK PART IN THE ASSASSINATION OF A QUEEN?
I...
I-I WANT TO ASK YOU ONE THING.
HOW DID YOU COME TO KNOW ABOUT OUR PLAN?

I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT.
...!!
BUT YOU ARE DIFFERENT, MINISTER FOSS.
I HAD PREDICTED YOU WOULD BECOME MY ENEMY...
...EVER SINCE THAT MORNING I DEPLOYED.
TH- THEN...
WHY ME?!
YOU CAUGHT SIGHT OF MY EYES THEN.
!
THAT TIME...!!
I KNEW FROM THAT TIME THAT YOU WOULD NEVER PERMIT MY EXISTENCE.
...H--
HOW ?!

AT THAT INSTANT...
...YOUR EYES...
...BETRAYED YOUR FEAR.
WHEN A MAN IS FACED WITH SOMETHING HE TRULY FEARS, HE CANNOT IGNORE IT.
HE HAS ONLY TWO OPTIONS...
HE CAN BECOME SUBORDINATE AND FALL UNDER ITS WING...
...OR HE CAN STRIKE IT OUT AND ERASE THE FEAR.

I'VE LONG KNOWN THAT THERE WERE MORE THAN A FEW AMONGST THE CONSERVATIVES IN COURT WHO DID NOT THINK WELL OF ME, BUT I WASN'T ABLE TO DETERMINE SPECIFICALLY WHO THEY WERE.
BUT SOMEONE AS SHREWD AS YOU WAS CERTAIN TO ROUND THEM UP AND GO ABOUT TRYING TO REMOVE ME.
THOUGH STILL...
......
THAT THE QUEEN HERSELF WOULD PLAY A PART WAS UNFORESEEN.
H-HOW COULD THIS BE?! JUST FROM OUR EYES MEETING FOR THAT INSTANT?! HAVE I BEEN DANCING TO THIS MAN'S TUNE EVER SINCE THEN?!
...YES, THE REASON I CAN'T STOP TREMBLING ISN'T BECAUSE I BETRAYED MY COMRADES...NOR WAS IT THAT I WAS AN ACCOMPLICE TO THE QUEEN'S MURDER!!
IT'S HIM...!!
IT'S THAT THIS MAN IS DREADFUL!!!

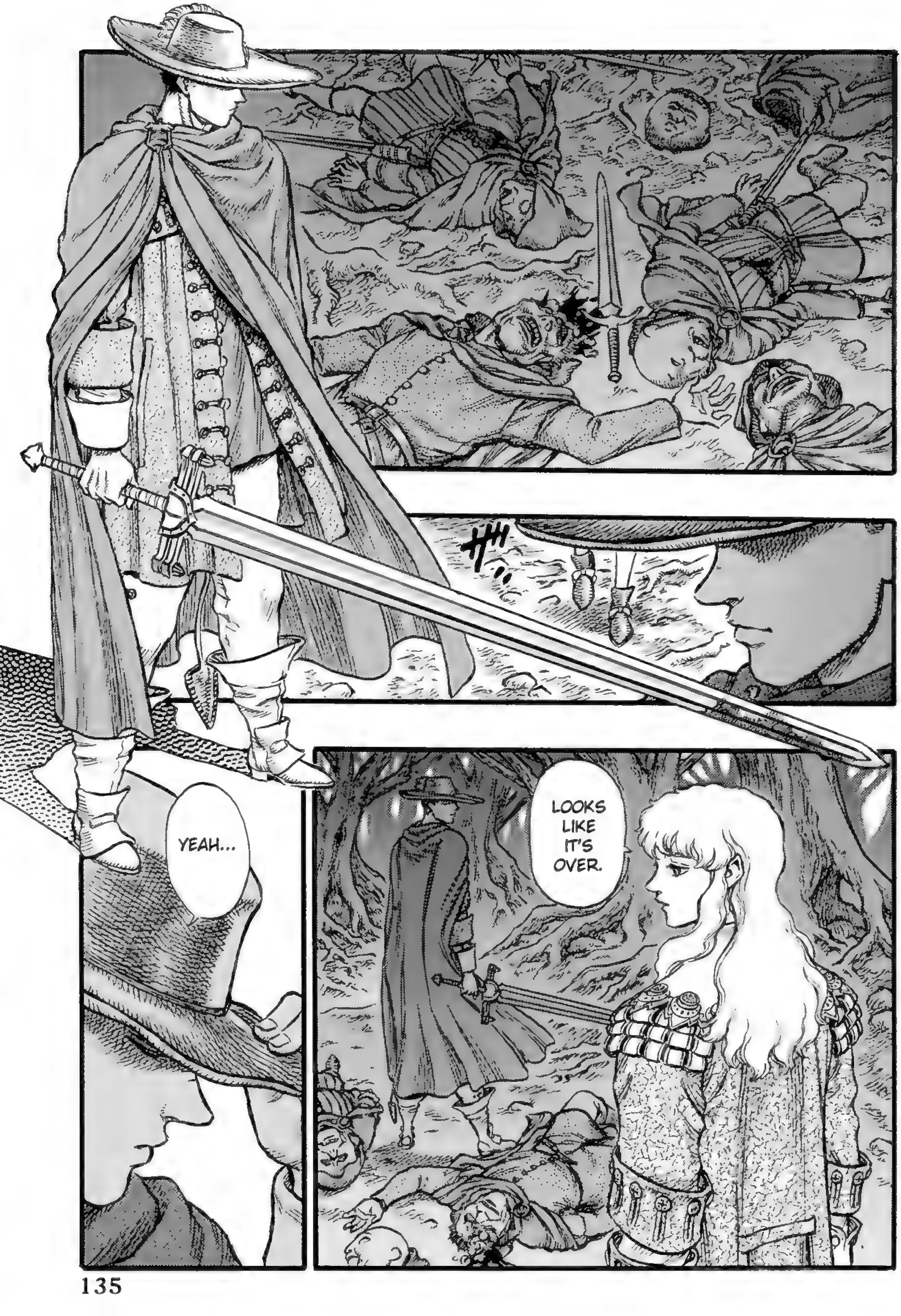
ザクリ.
......
ビリィィィ!
THERE'S NO LONGER ANY NEED FOR THIS BLOOD OATH I CONFISCATED.
WITH OUR MUTUAL FUTURE IN MIND...
...LET'S NOT ALLOW SOME SILLY *ENMITY* TO LINGER BETWEEN US.


I HOPE...
...WE CAN BE *AMICABLE* HENCEFORTH.
I WILL RETURN TO YOU WHAT I PROMISED.
HOW?! HOW, WHEN HE'S DONE SO MUCH...
...CAN HE SMILE INNOCENTLY THAT WAY?!
COME THIS WAY, MINISTER.
......

ELISE!!
FATHER!!
ELISE... YOU'RE SAFE!! YOU DON'T NEED TO WORRY NOW!!
FATHERRRRR!!
HEHEH... CALL IT AN EMOTIONAL REUNION, EH?

BUT THIS WAS ONE *TOUGH* JOB.
HE HEH...
HEE HEE HEE ...
WE HAD TO STAKE OUT THE KID'S LESSON SCHEDULE FOR A WEEK, THEN WAIT FOR HER TO LEAVE IN A CARRIAGE...
...THOUGH YOU WERE THE ONE WHO MADE THE ARRANGEMENTS, SIR...
OF COURSE, AS *PROMISED*, WE WERE COURTEOUS WITH HER.
WE DIDN'T GIVE HER A SINGLE SPANKING EVEN IF SHE SCREAMED AND CRIED.
ジャラ
GOOD WORK. HERE'S THE REST OF YOUR REWARD.
OHH ...!!
WOW, SO MUCH!!
IF YOU NEED ANYTHING ELSE DONE, PLEASE CALL ON US.
WE WOULD *VERY* MUCH LIKE TO CONTINUE DEALING WITH YOU FOR A LONG TIME, SIR.
WE'LL BE ON OUR WAY, THEN......
....

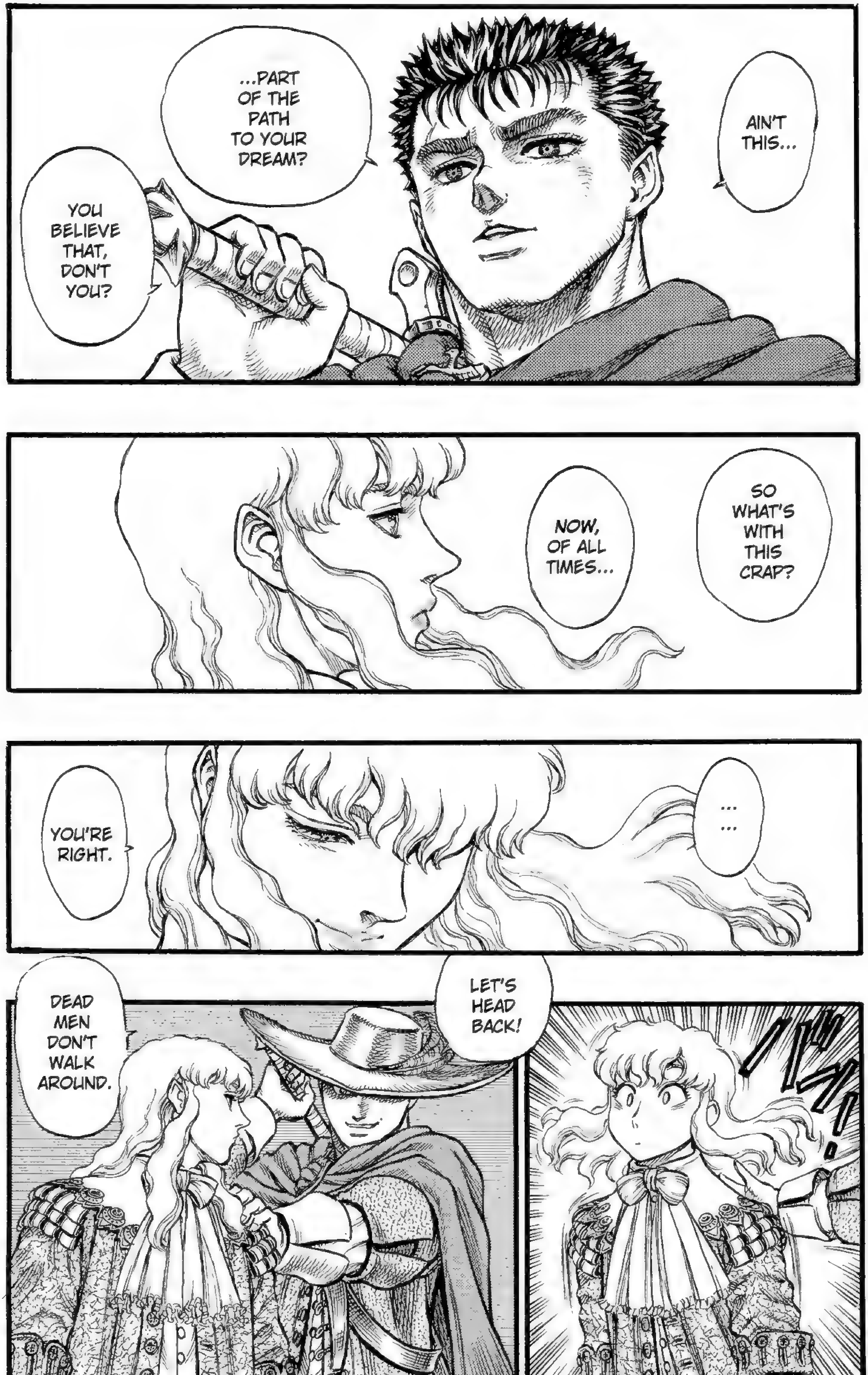
HEHEH... THAT WAS SIMPLE.
NOT TO MENTION *PROFITABLE.*
HOPE HE HIRES US AGAIN.
C'MON, IF HE TRIES TO CUT TIES WITH US...
...WE'LL JUST USE THIS KIDNAPPING AGAINST HIM.
!
WH- WHO'S THERE?!
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?!

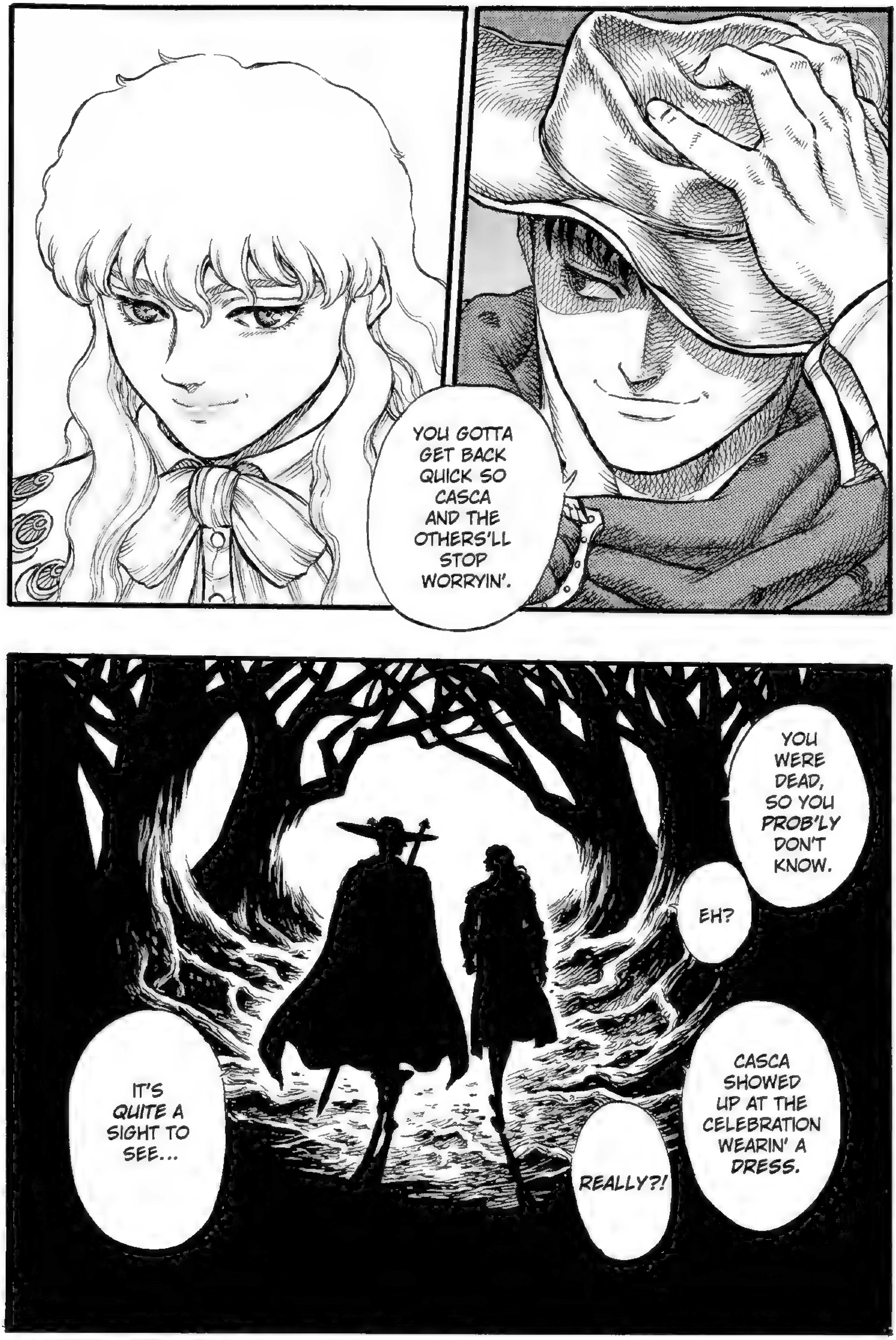

LOOKS LIKE IT'S OVER.
YEAH...

THAT TAKES CARE OF IT. ALL OF IT.
TO THINK THEY THREW THEIR LIVES AWAY FOR CHUMP CHANGE.
WELL, I GUESS IT BEATS A SOLDIER'S MEAGER WAGE.
LEAVE IT THERE.
THE MONEY'S THEIRS BY RIGHT.
THEY DID THE WORK TO EARN IT.
LEAVE IT WITH THEM.
... ...
HELL OF A WASTE.
MONEY'S THE KEY TO ALL DOORS?

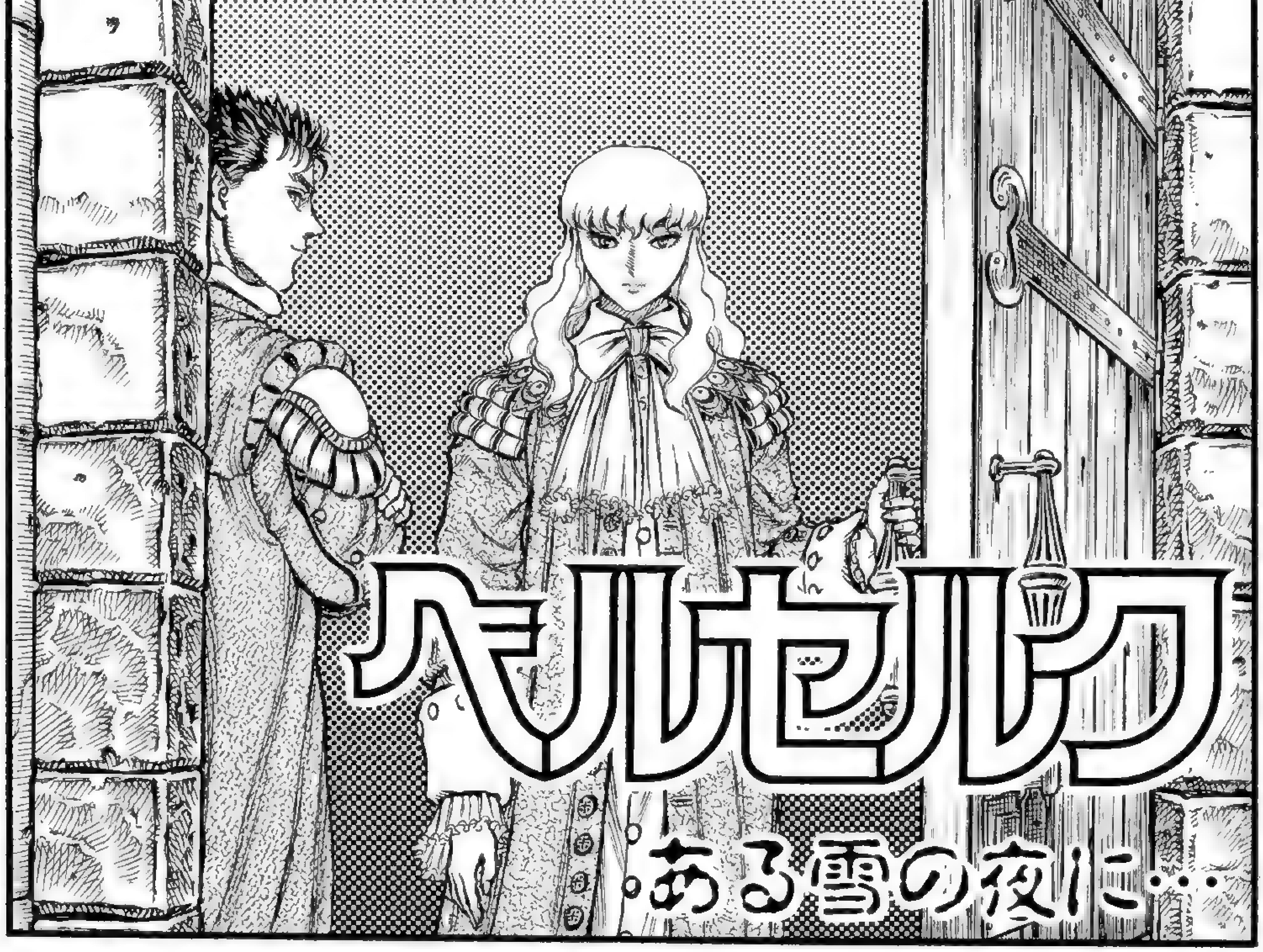
IS IT SAFE TO LET THE LITTLE BALD GUY GO?
YEAH.
I THINK HE'S LEARNED TODAY'S LESSON.
I CAN'T PREDICT THE FUTURE, BUT PROBABLY...
WHADDA YA MEAN "PROB-ABLY"?
WE'LL CROSS THAT BRIDGE WHEN WE COME TO IT.
BUT Y'KNOW, THE CASTLE'S GONNA BE UPSET *AGAIN* BY ALL THIS. THIS ONE NIGHT'S SEEN A MOUNTAIN OF CORPSES WITH THE QUEEN ON TOP.
THANKFULLY, NOT ONE PERSON WHO COULD NAME YOU IS STILL AROUND.
I DOUBT ANYONE'D EVER SUSPECT SOMEONE WHO NEARLY DIED PULLING IT OFF.
DOES IT SEEM CRUEL?
HUH?

I INVOLVED YOU IN THIS FILTHY SCHEME...
...AND I DIDN'T EVEN GET MY HANDS DIRTY.
I LEFT ALL THE DANGEROUS, TAXING WORK TO YOU...
DO YOU...
...THINK THAT I'M *CRUEL?*
......
WHAT KINDA QUESTION'S *THAT* FOR THE GUY WHO KILLED A HUNDRED MEN?!
IDIOT!


AIN'T THIS...
...PART OF THE PATH TO YOUR DREAM?
YOU BELIEVE THAT, DON'T YOU?
SO WHAT'S WITH THIS CRAP?
NOW, OF ALL TIMES...
... ...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
DEAD MEN DON'T WALK AROUND.
LET'S HEAD BACK!

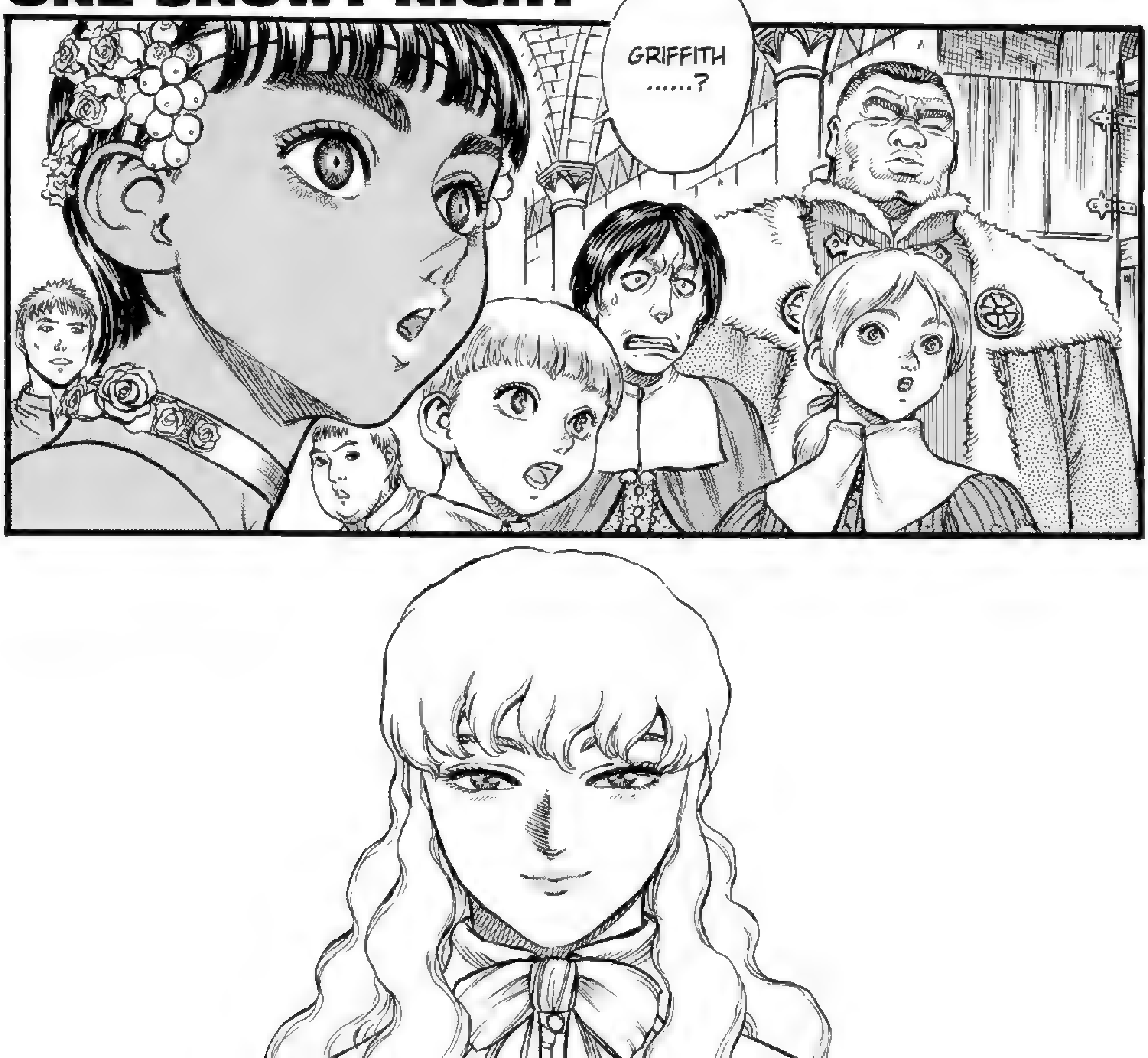

YOU GOTTA GET BACK QUICK SO CASCA AND THE OTHERS'LL STOP WORRYIN'.
YOU WERE DEAD, SO YOU PROB'LY DON'T KNOW.
EH?
CASCA SHOWED UP AT THE CELEBRATION WEARIN' A *DRESS*.
REALLY?!
IT'S *QUITE* A SIGHT TO SEE...

TOMBSTONE OF FLAME (2): END

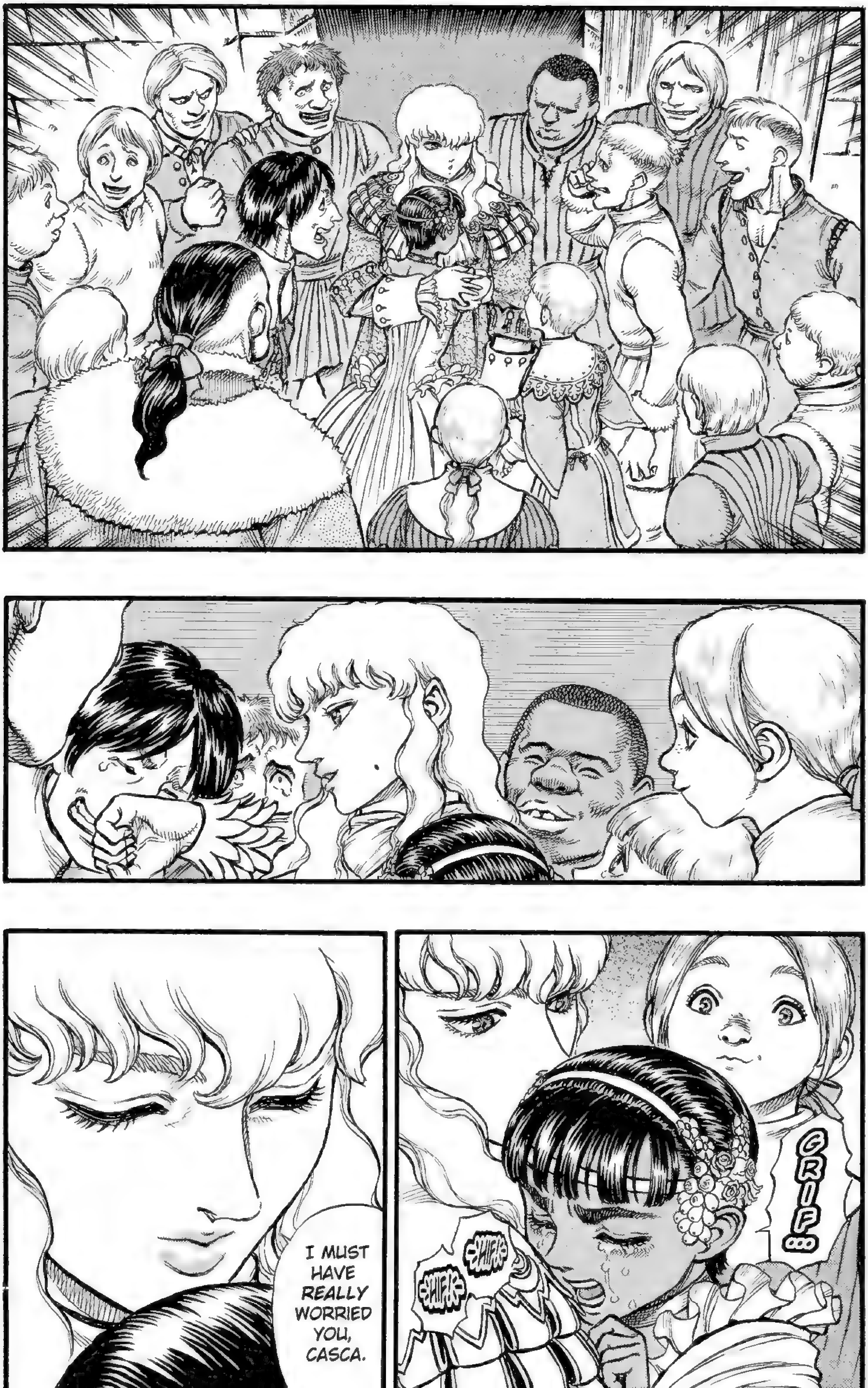


ベルセルク
・ある雪の夜に…

ONE SNOWY NIGHT



GRIFFITH!!


I MUST HAVE REALLY WORRIED YOU, CASCA.
HIF
HIF
GRIP...

IT WAS TERRIBLE. CASCA HASN'T BEEN HERSELF EVER SINCE YOU FAINTED, GRIFFITH.
グスス…
SORRY.
EH ...?
THIS DRESS LOOKS GOOD ON YOU.

SEVERAL DAYS LATER, THE QUEEN'S ROYAL FUNERAL WAS HELD IN A SPLENDID YET SOLEMN MANNER.

THE ENIGMATIC DEATHS OF THE QUEEN AND THE CONSERVATIVE MINISTERS, ALONG WITH THE ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF COUNT GRIFFITH ON THE SAME NIGHT...
...FELL INTO THE REALM OF WHISPERED RUMOR. IT WAS SAID THAT IT HAD BEEN THE WORK OF CHUDER HARD-LINERS OR POSSIBLY AN ASSASSIN FROM A THIRD COUNTRY...
...SEEKING TO OBSTRUCT THE MIDLAND-CHUDER ARMISTICE AGREEMENT.
THE FOLLOWING DAY, THE REMAINS OF SEVERAL INDIVIDUALS THOUGHT POSSIBLY TO BE CONNECTED TO THE INCIDENTS WERE DISCOVERED OUTSIDE WINDHAM CASTLE...
...BUT NOT ENOUGH CLUES WERE EVER FOUND TO EXPLAIN THE FACTS OF THE SITUATION...
THE TRUTH...
...VANISHED INTO THE DARKNESS.

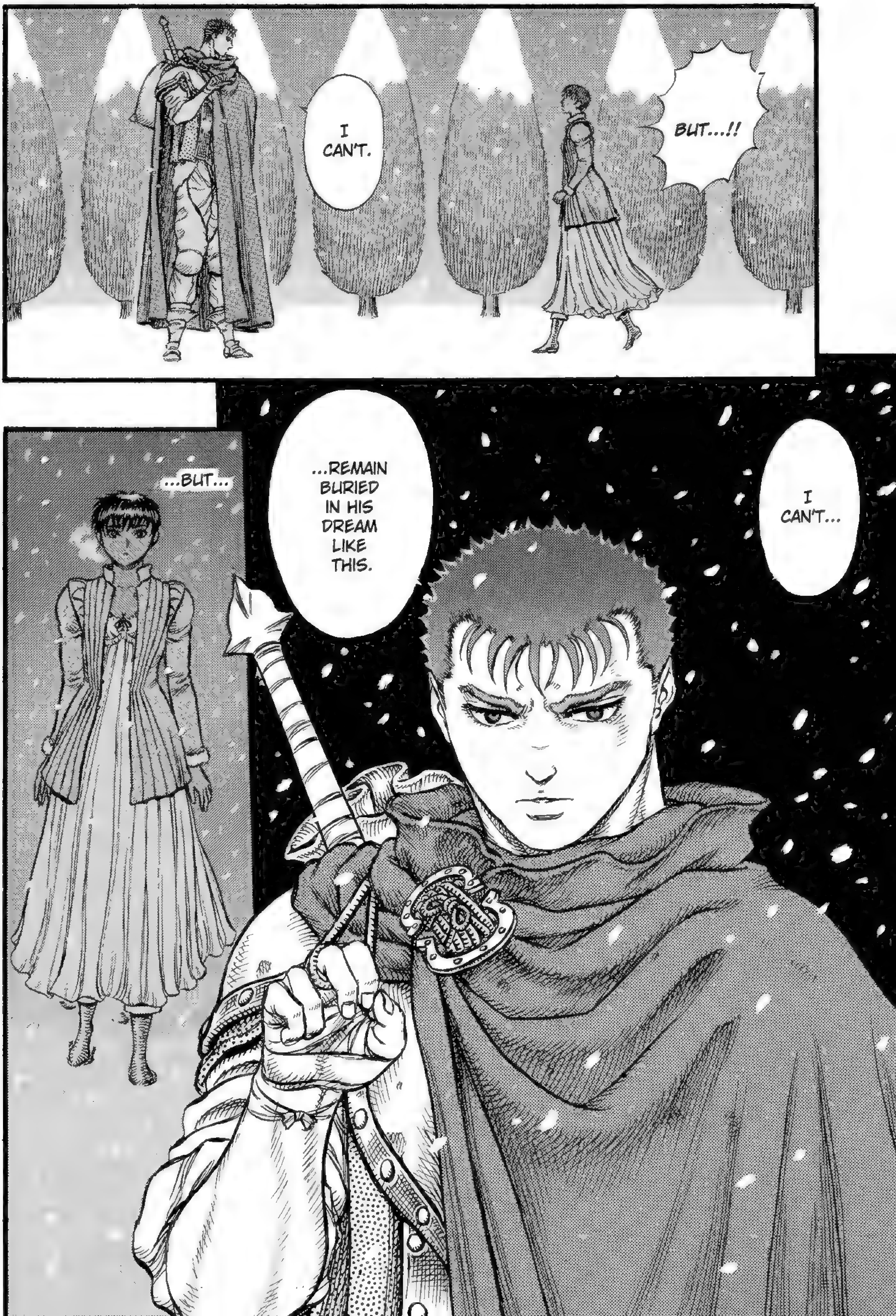
ONE MONTH LATER...
ギュ。。

バタン!!

IT'S SNOWING ...
...
WHO'S THAT OUT THIS LATE?
キュ
!
GUTS...?!
SO, HEY! THIS CHICK WAS A WORK OF ART!
...

CASCA? WHERE'RE YOU HEADED SO LATE?
WHAT'S THE RUSH ...?
NICE OUTFIT...
BATHROOM, PROBABLY. S'COLD, AFTER ALL.
GUTS!!
... GUTS.
YOU...

ARE YOU…
…LEAVING?
IS THAT IT?
…… ……
W…
WAIT A MINUTE…
I'VE…
…ALREADY MADE UP MY MND ABOUT IT.
I WAS ON BAD TERMS WITH YOU FOR A LONG TIME… BUT WE'RE COMRADES WHO'VE BRAVED DEATH TOGETHER.
ALL THE TROUBLE THE BAND OF THE HAWK HAS GONE THROUGH IS STARTING TO PAY OFF…IT ALL STARTS HERE, RIGHT?
KNOWING THAT… AT A TIME LIKE THIS…


BUT...!!
I CAN'T.
I CAN'T...
...REMAIN BURIED IN HIS DREAM LIKE THIS.
...BUT...

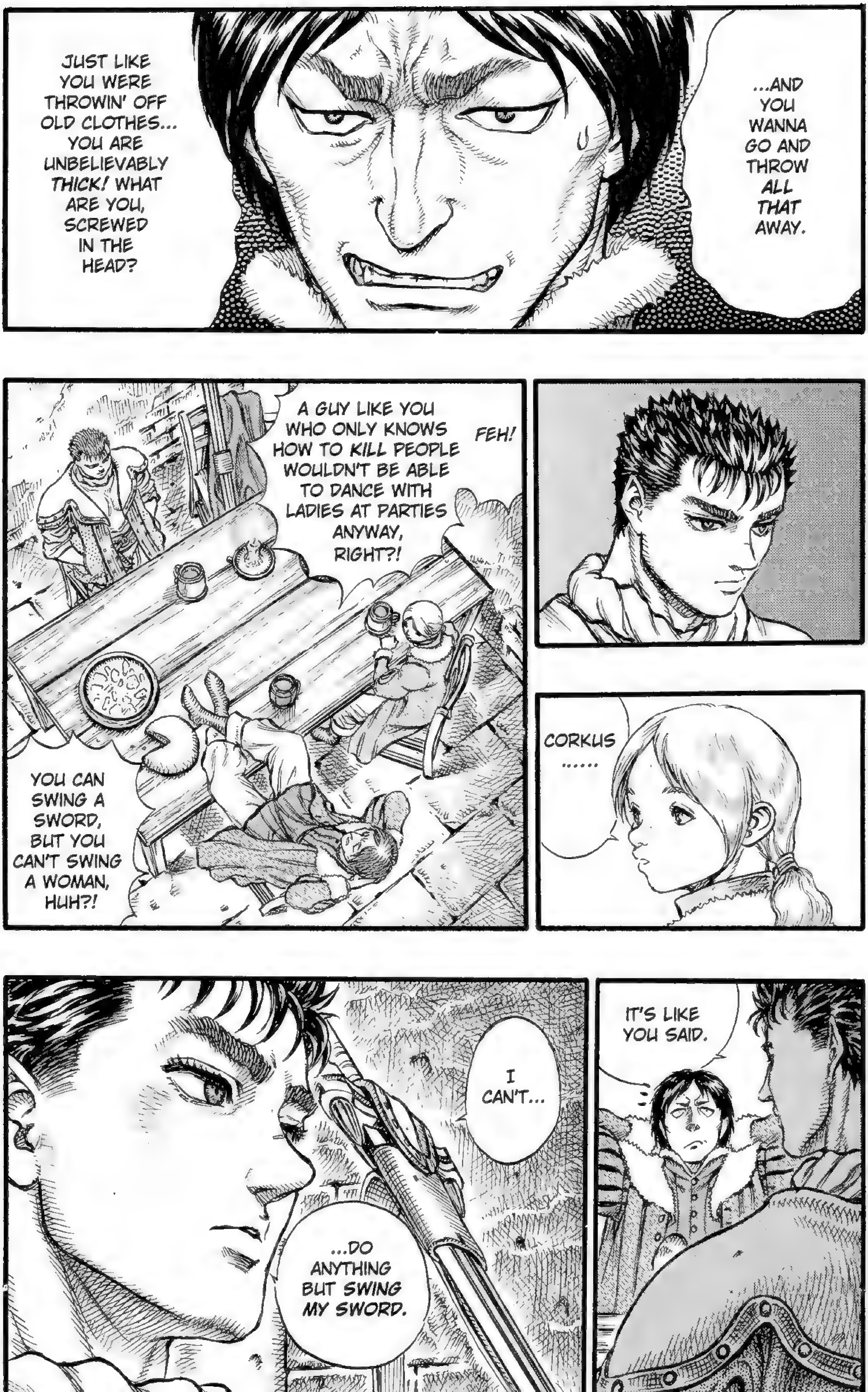
I HOPE...
...THINGS GO WELL WITH YOU...
...AND GRIFFITH...
HEY.
CORKUS. JUDEAU...
ポン
COME TALK WITH US AWHILE.
... ...

GRIFFITH MIGHT...
GRIFFITH MIGHT KEEP HIM FROM LEAVING...!!

HEY, LOOK AT 'EM!
IT'S THE HAWK COMMANDERS!
HEY, HEY FELLAS.
HA HA HA..
GIVE IT A REST FOR NOW, CORKUS.
BUT WHY, THOUGH? I MEAN, *NOW* ALL OF A SUDDEN...
HEY, SWEET THING!
....
IT *AIN'T* SUDDEN.
I DECIDED BEFORE OUR LAST DISPATCH.

ARE YOU DISSATISFIED OR SOMETHING?
DISSATISFIED? I'VE GOT NO REASON TO BE.
HEY, WHAT TIME'RE YOU OFF WORK?
EHH?
THE HAWKS'RE DIFFERENT FROM REGULAR BANDS.
THEY GAVE ME, A WANDERING MERCENARY WHO KNEW ONLY HOW TO FIGHT, MY FIRST TASTE OF COMRADERY...
THAT'S NOT SOMETHING THE OLD YOU WOULD'VE SAID.
THESE THREE YEARS REALLY HAVE BEEN FUN.
IT FEELS LIKE...
...IT'S BEEN A BIG FESTIVAL OR SOMETHIN' ALL THIS TIME.
NO WAY I'M DISSATISFIED.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
IT'S MARY...
THEN WHY IN THE WORLD...
...CORKUS, DO YOU MIND?
SHUT IT!!
I'M SIR CORKUS. UNIT COMMANDER IN THE BAND OF THE HAWK!!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME TRYIN' MY HAND AT A GIRL OR TWO IN A BAR?!
HUHH?

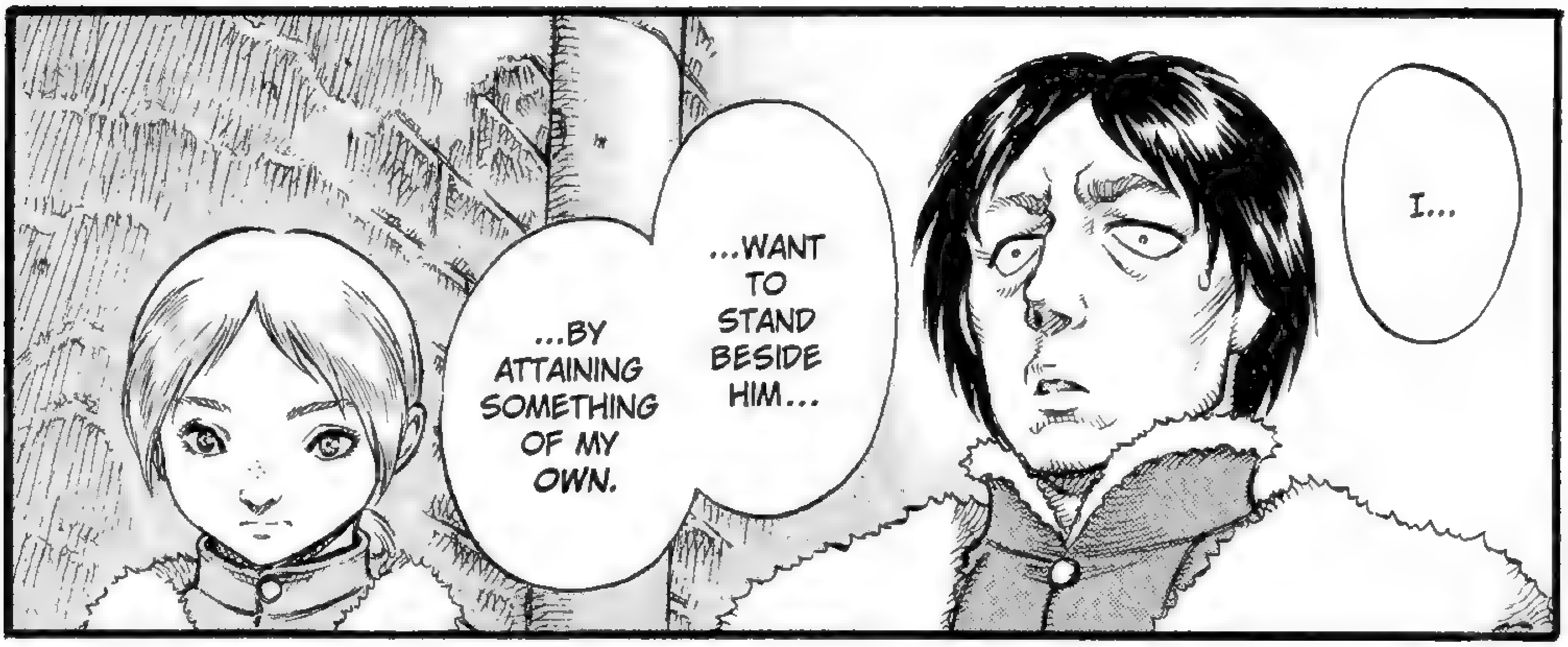
THEN IT'S SMOOTH SAILIN' LIVIN' IN THE COURT!!
TO TOP IT OFF, WE'RE GONNA BE JOININ' THE *NOBLES* PRETTY SOON!!
IF YOU WALK DOWN THE STREET, KIDS AND WOMEN SWARM YOU! AND *NO WONDER!* WE'RE THE *HEROES* OF THE KINGDOM!!
ANY BAR OR INN IN TOWN! YOU SAY YOU'RE A HAWK COMMANDER AT ANY SHOP IN WINDHAM AND IT'S A *FREE RIDE!*
SO LONG TO THOSE MUSTY BARRACKS!! IF THINGS GO WELL WE COULD BE *CASTLE LORDS!!*
COMMONERS LIKE US COULDN'T EVEN *DREAM* OF IT!
NORMALLY WE COULD NEVER HAVE GOTTEN *ANY* OF THIS!
WE FINALLY MADE IT!!
I CAN'T TELL YA HOW MANY BLOOD-STAINED MEMORIES I HAVE OF ENEMY SWORDS NEARLY TAKIN' MY HEAD OFF!! WITH ONE FOOT PLANTED IN THE GRAVE!!
BUT WE GOT IT!!

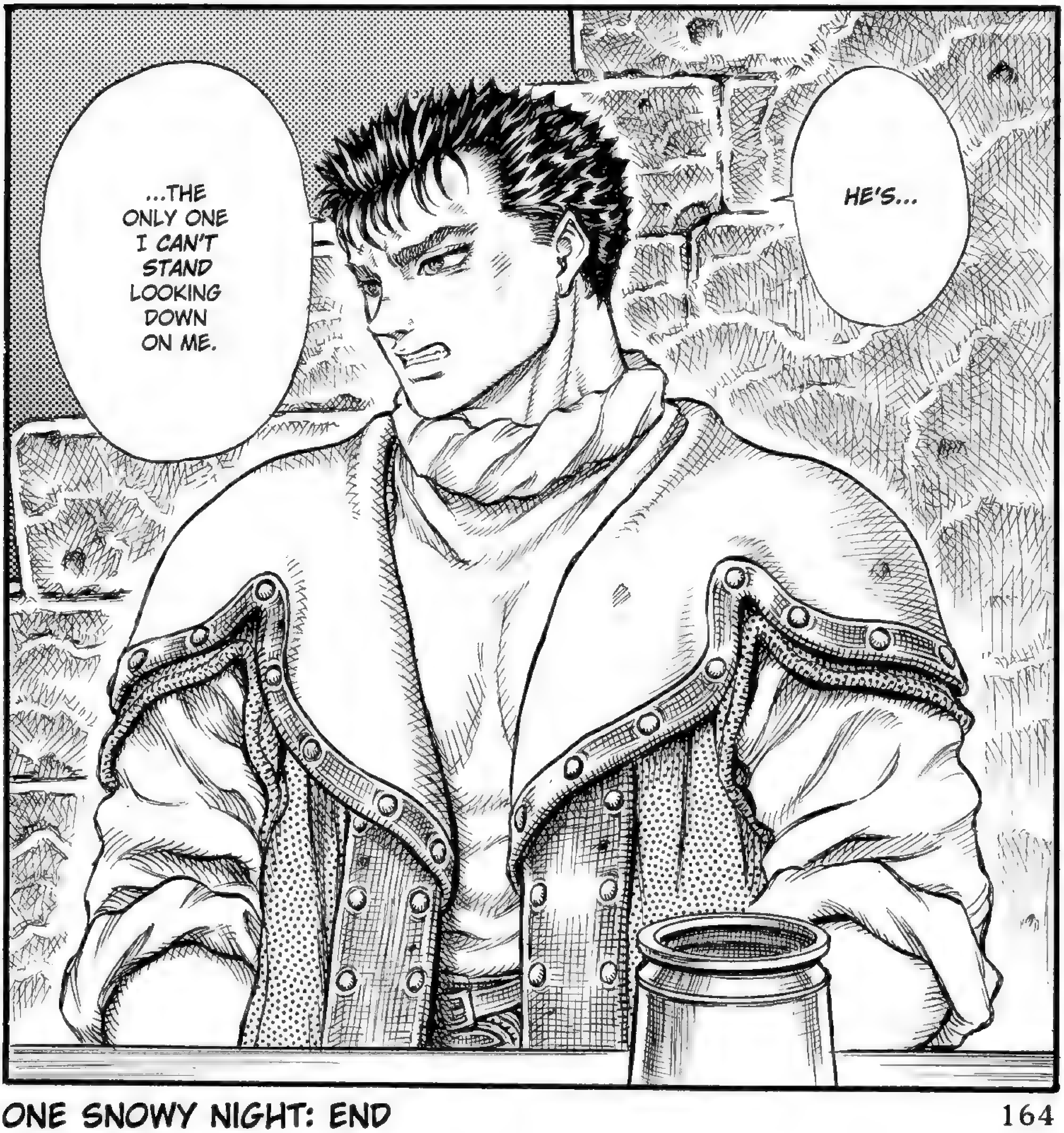

...AND YOU WANNA GO AND THROW *ALL THAT* AWAY.
JUST LIKE YOU WERE THROWIN' OFF OLD CLOTHES... YOU ARE UNBELIEVABLY *THICK!* WHAT ARE YOU, SCREWED IN THE HEAD?
FEH!
A GUY LIKE YOU WHO ONLY KNOWS HOW TO *KILL* PEOPLE WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DANCE WITH LADIES AT PARTIES ANYWAY, RIGHT?!
YOU CAN SWING A SWORD, BUT YOU CAN'T SWING A WOMAN, HUH?!
CORKUS ......
IT'S LIKE YOU SAID.
I CAN'T...
...DO ANYTHING BUT *SWING MY SWORD.*

WHEN I FIRST KILLED A MAN, I WAS A KID WHO STILL DIDN'T KNOW RIGHT FROM LEFT.
I HAVEN'T LEARNED ANYTHING OFF THE BATTLEFIELD *SINCE* THEN--AND I HAVEN'T *TRIED* TO LEARN.
KILLING TO SURVIVE...
THERE WAS NOTHING ELSE I COULD DO. THAT WAS *EVERYTHING.*
...BUT...
...IT WAS ALL RIGHT.
IF ONE PERSON ...
...ANY-ONE...
...HAD LOOKED MY WAY...
BUT WANDERING THE BATTLEFIELDS MADE ME REALIZE...
...THAT *WOULDN'T* DO ME ANY GOOD IN TRYIN' TO SURVIVE.
IT WAS JUST SOMETHIN' OF A CHILDISH COMPLAINT.

EVEN SO...
INCIDENTALLY...
I FOUND SOMEONE I REALLY WANTED...
...TO HAVE LOOK AT ME.
HE *DIDN'T* HAVE ANYTHING.
YET HE WAS TRYING TO TAKE HOLD OF EVERYTHING.
...NO.
SOMETHING ABOUT HIM MADE YOU...
...THINK IT COULD HAPPEN.

THAT'S WHY...
...THERE'S NO ROOM AT HIS SIDE FOR THE WEAK.
...BUT IN ORDER FOR HIM TO AIM SO HIGH...
...HE HAS TO ALWAYS HONE HIMSELF TO THE VERY LIMIT.
AND I'VE HAD ENOUGH...
...LOOKING UP AT HIM...
...FROM INSIDE HIS DREAM.
BUT STRANGELY...
THE MORE CLEAR THAT BECOMES...
...THE MORE DAZZLING HE IS IN MY EYES...


I...
...WANT TO STAND BESIDE HIM...
...BY ATTAINING SOMETHING OF MY OWN.


HE'S...
...THE ONLY ONE I CAN'T STAND LOOKING DOWN ON ME.

ONE SNOWY NIGHT: END

HE'S...
...THE ONLY ONE I *CAN'T* STAND LOOKING DOWN ON ME.
I...
...WANT TO STAND BESIDE HIM...
...BY ATTAINING SOMETHING OF MY OWN.

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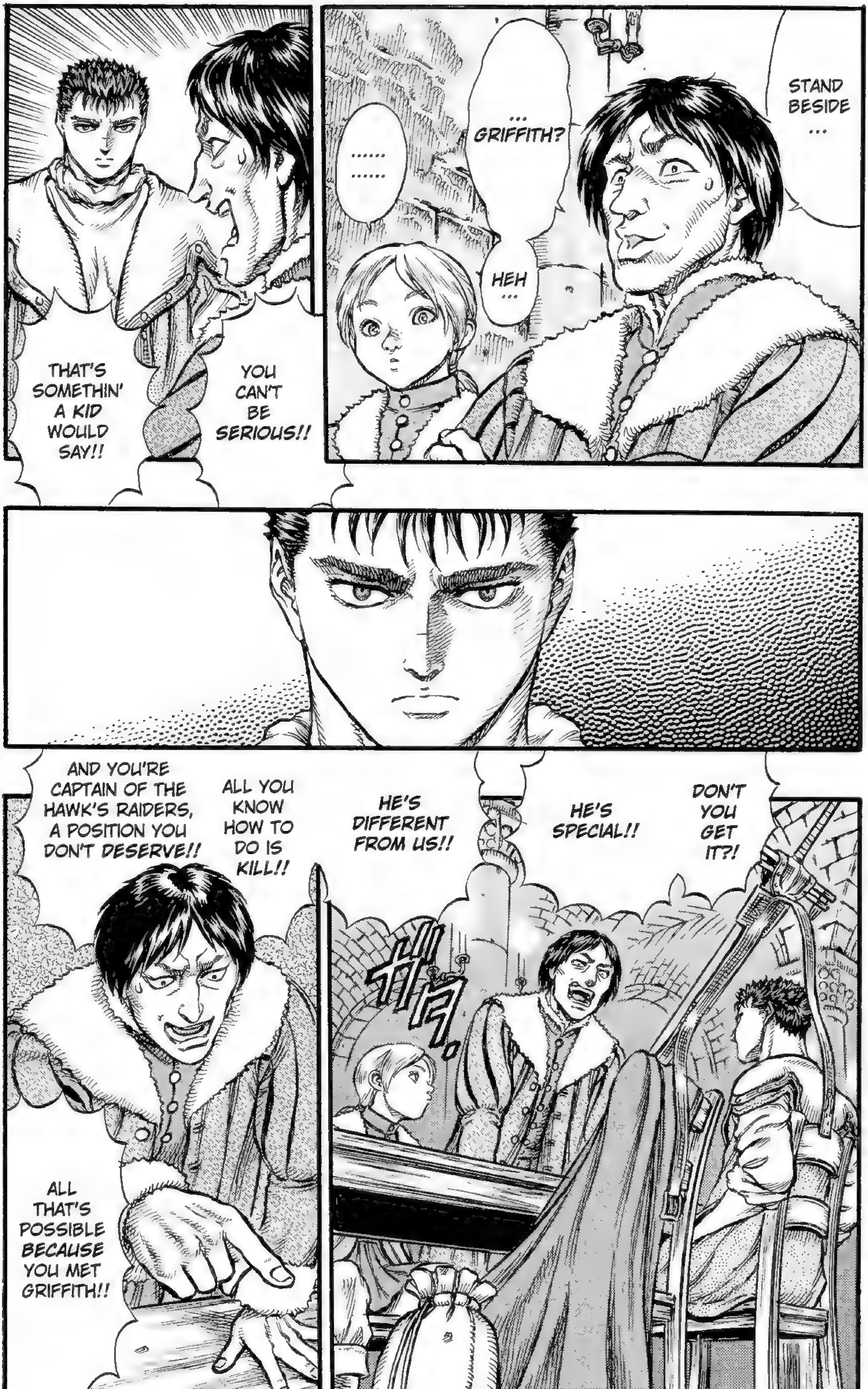
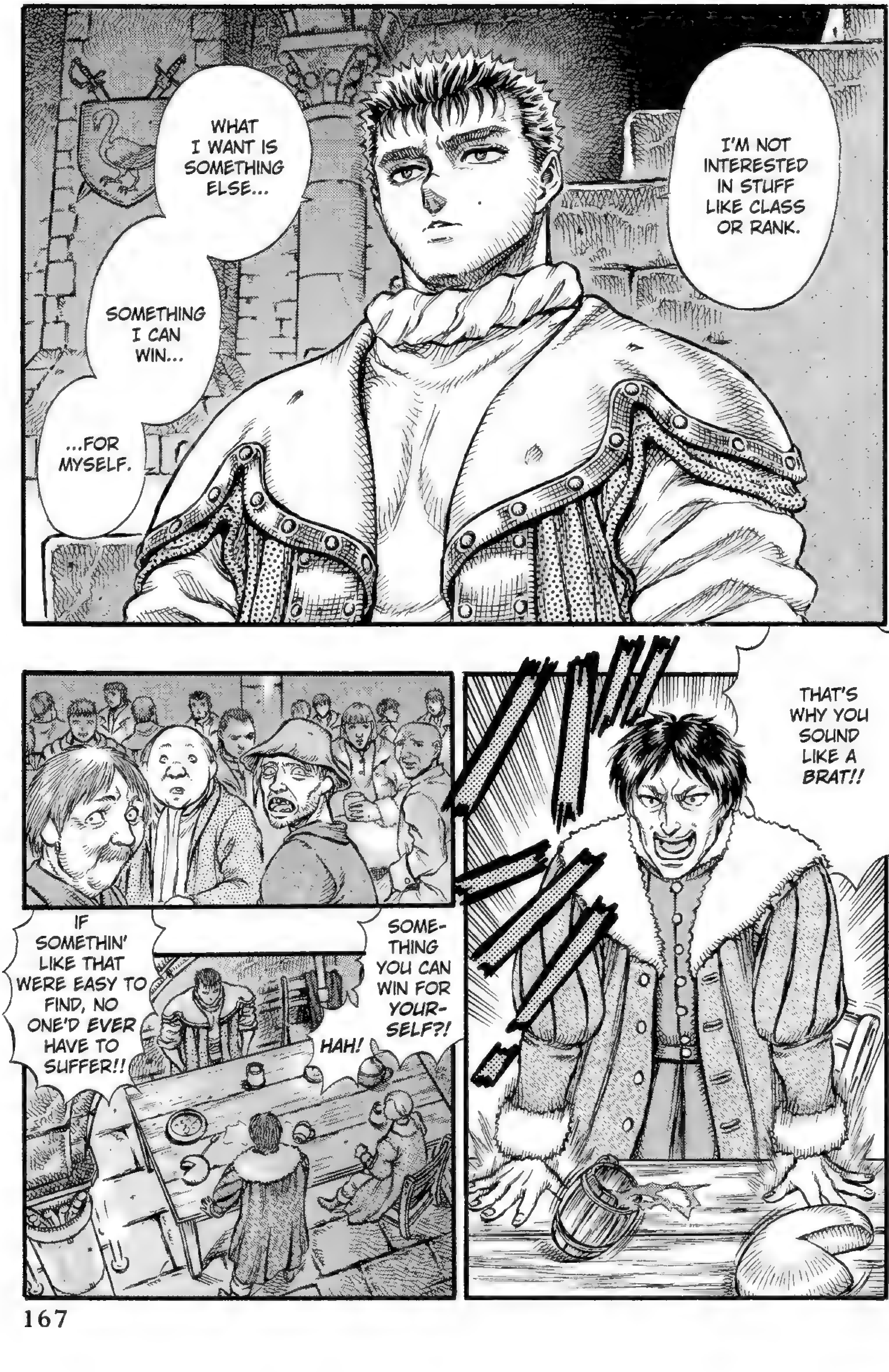
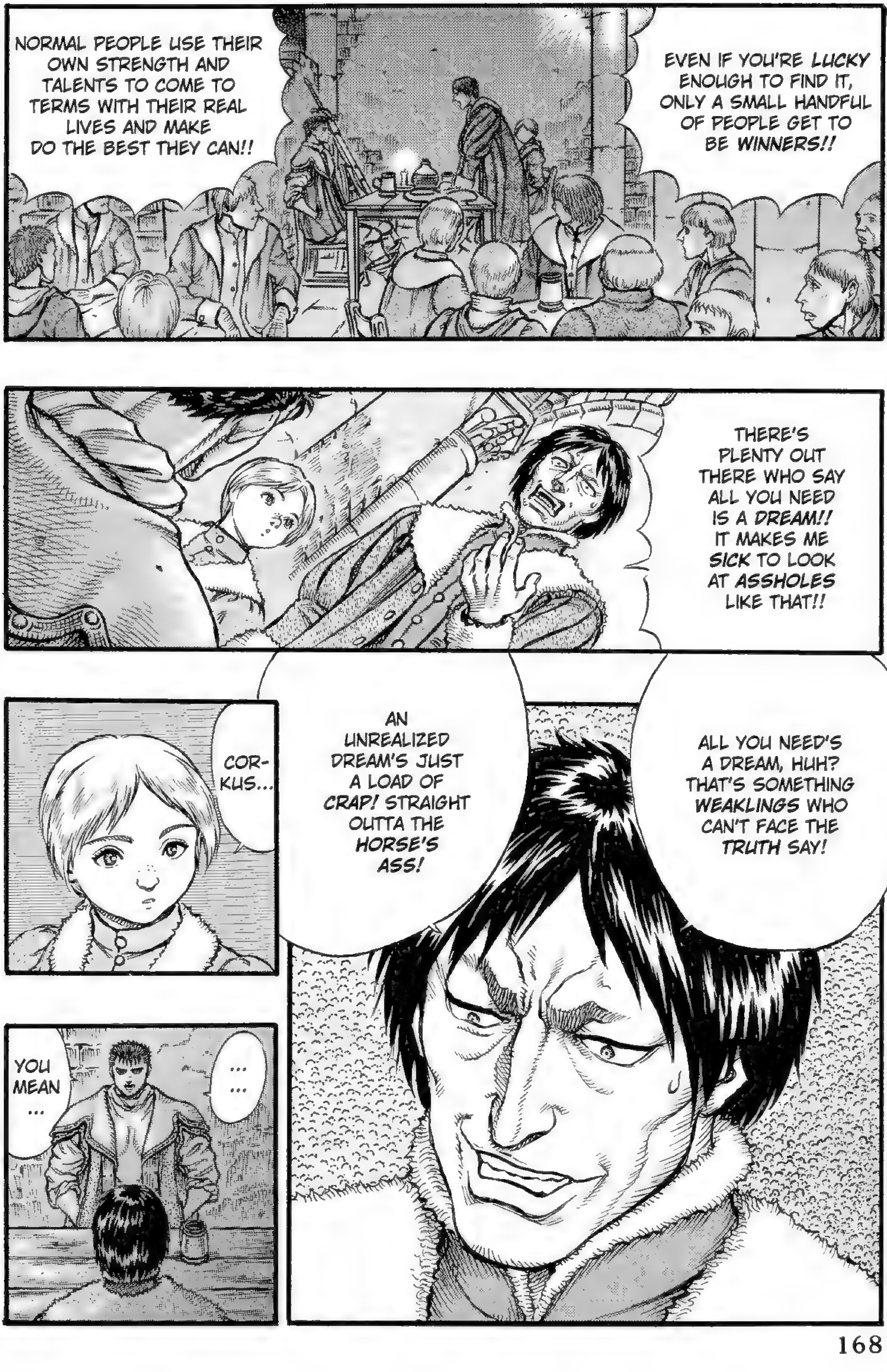
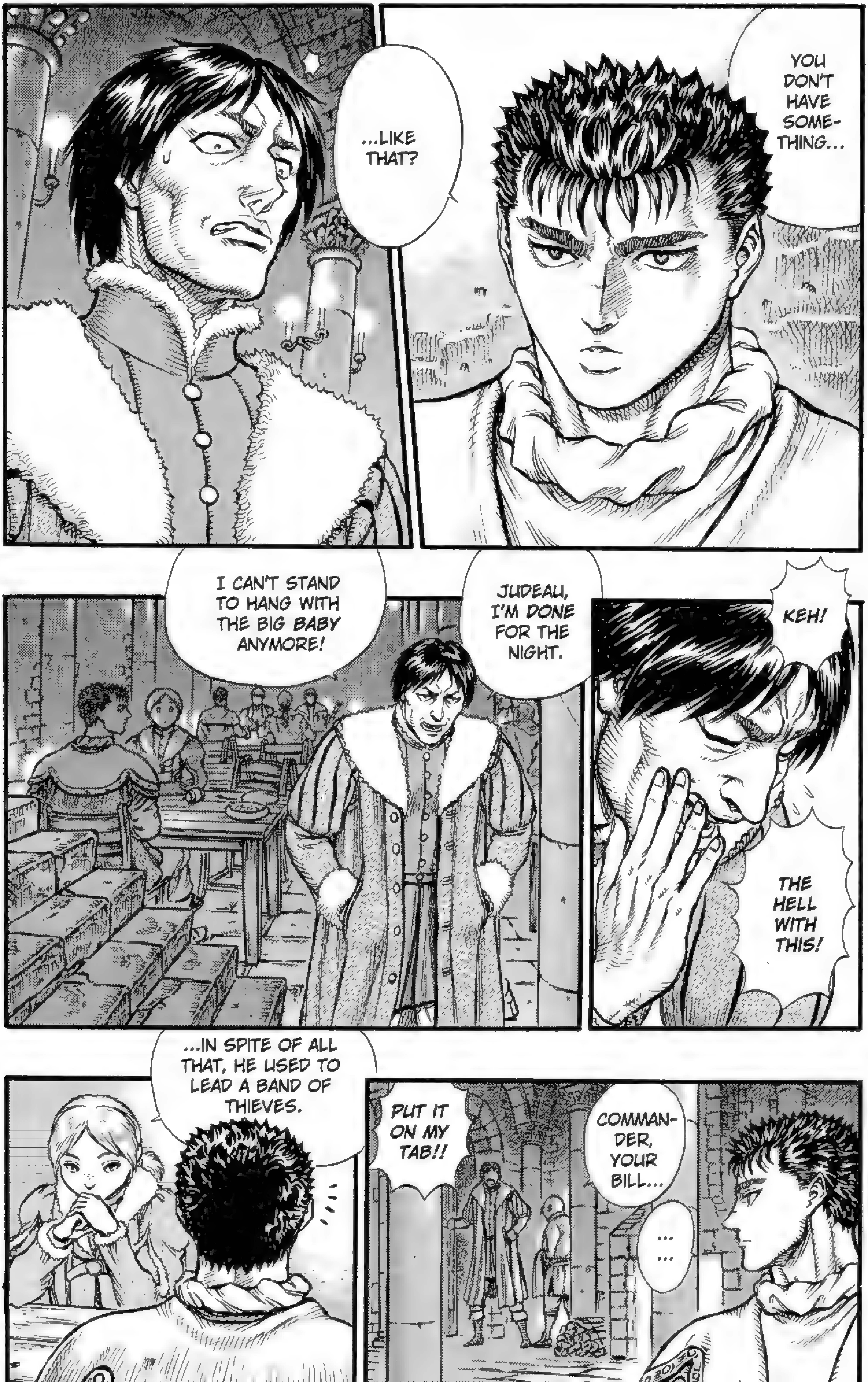
THE MORNING DEPARTURE, CHAPTER 1

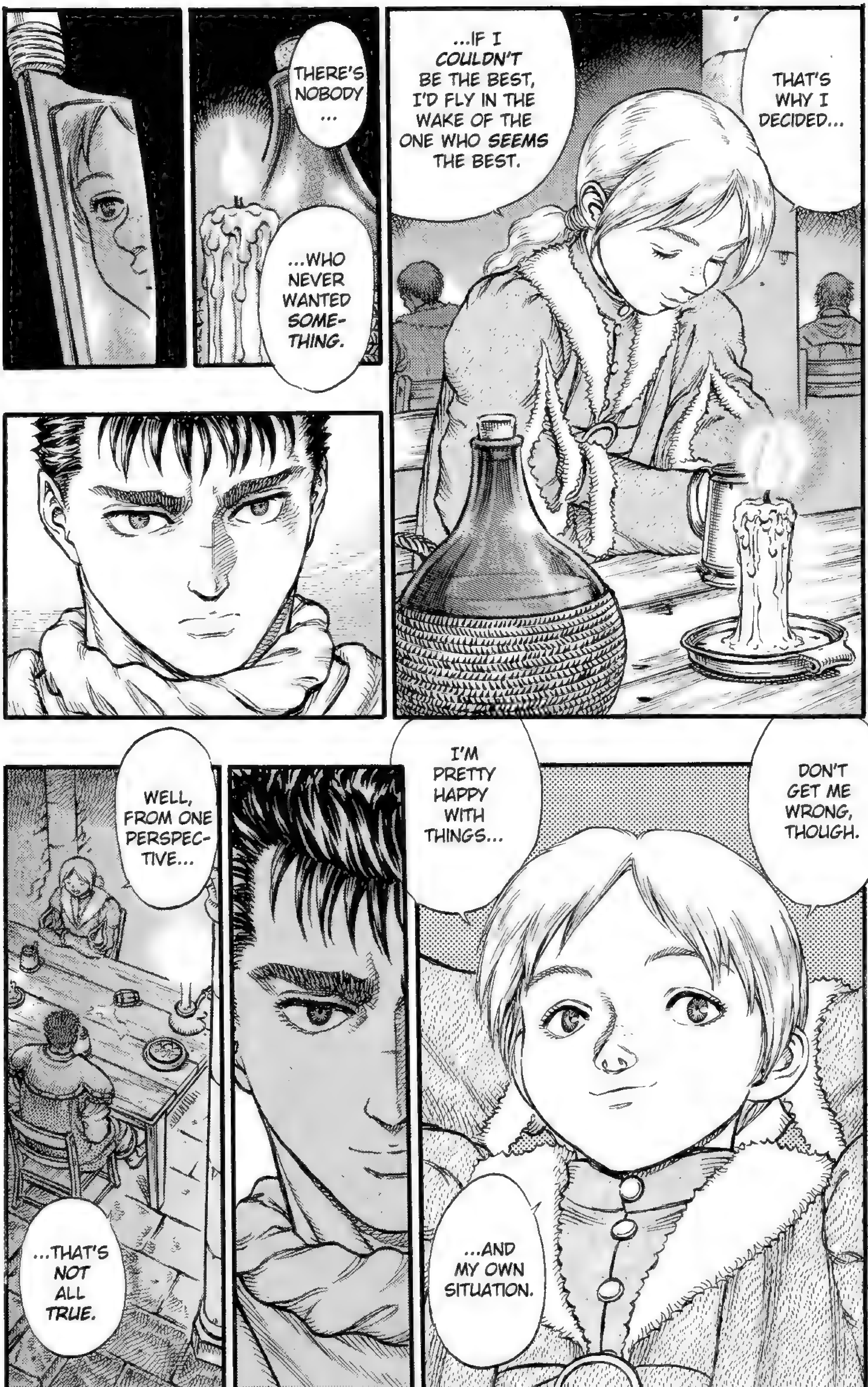

STAND BESIDE ...
... GRIFFITH?
HEH ...
....
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS!!
THAT'S SOMETHIN' A KID WOULD SAY!!
DON'T YOU GET IT?!
HE'S SPECIAL!!
HE'S DIFFERENT FROM US!!
ガタ
ALL YOU KNOW HOW TO DO IS KILL!!
AND YOU'RE CAPTAIN OF THE HAWK'S RAIDERS, A POSITION YOU DON'T DESERVE!!
ALL THAT'S POSSIBLE BECAUSE YOU MET GRIFFITH!!


I'M NOT INTERESTED IN STUFF LIKE CLASS OR RANK.
WHAT I WANT IS SOMETHING ELSE...
SOMETHING I CAN WIN...
...FOR MYSELF.
THAT'S WHY YOU SOUND LIKE A *BRAT*!!
SOME-THING YOU CAN WIN FOR *YOUR-SELF*?!
HAH!
IF SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT WERE EASY TO FIND, NO ONE'D *EVER* HAVE TO SUFFER!!


EVEN IF YOU'RE *LUCKY* ENOUGH TO FIND IT, ONLY A SMALL HANDFUL OF PEOPLE GET TO BE *WINNERS!!*
NORMAL PEOPLE USE THEIR OWN STRENGTH AND TALENTS TO COME TO TERMS WITH THEIR REAL LIVES AND MAKE DO THE BEST THEY CAN!!
THERE'S PLENTY OUT THERE WHO SAY ALL YOU NEED IS A *DREAM!!* IT MAKES ME *SICK* TO LOOK AT *ASSHOLES* LIKE THAT!!
ALL YOU NEED'S A DREAM, HUH? THAT'S SOMETHING *WEAKLINGS* WHO CAN'T FACE THE *TRUTH* SAY!
AN UNREALIZED DREAM'S JUST A LOAD OF *CRAP!* STRAIGHT OUTTA THE *HORSE'S ASS!*
CORKUS...
......
YOU MEAN...


YOU DON'T HAVE SOMETHING...
...LIKE THAT?
KEH!
THE HELL WITH THIS!
JUDEAU, I'M DONE FOR THE NIGHT.
I CAN'T STAND TO HANG WITH THE BIG *BABY* ANYMORE!
COMMANDER, YOUR BILL...
PUT IT ON MY TAB!!
......
...IN SPITE OF ALL THAT, HE USED TO LEAD A BAND OF THIEVES.

WELL, IT WAS ONLY ABOUT TEN MEN, AND TIMES WERE TOUGH. THEY CROSSED THE BAND OF THE HAWK AND SURE ENOUGH GOT PUT IN THEIR PLACE.
EVER SINCE THEN, HE'S BEEN ONE OF OURS.
WHILE NO BIG DEAL...
SHOO! SHOO!
MAYBE THERE *WAS* SOMETHING HE TOO WANTED TO WIN FOR HIMSELF.
......
......
AS FOR ME...
...I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A *JACK OF ALL TRADES.*
I'M BETTER THAN AVERAGE WITH SWORDS AND KNIVES...
キリ キリ
AND WITHOUT BOASTING, I HAVE A PRETTY QUICK WIT TOO.
トン
BUT...
...I'VE NEVER BEEN THE *BEST* AT ANYTHING.


THAT'S WHY I DECIDED...
...IF I *COULDN'T* BE THE BEST, I'D FLY IN THE WAKE OF THE ONE WHO *SEEMS* THE BEST.
THERE'S NOBODY ...
...WHO NEVER WANTED *SOMETHING.*
DON'T GET ME WRONG, THOUGH.
I'M PRETTY HAPPY WITH THINGS...
...AND MY OWN SITUATION.
WELL, FROM ONE PERSPECTIVE...
...THAT'S *NOT* ALL *TRUE.*

TO SACRIFICE YOUR STATUS AS CAPTAIN OF THE RAIDERS...
...AND THE PROMISE OF PEERAGE AND KNIGHTHOOD DANGLING BEFORE YOUR EYES, ALL FOR SOME VAGUE THING...
...I WONDER IF SOMETHING'S WRONG?
BUT MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH ALL MEN...
DREAMS.
WIN OR LOSE...
...I'M SURE YOU COULD SPEND YOUR WHOLE LIFE CHASING ONE.
THAT DAY, THREE YEARS AGO...
...I SAID YOU'D FIND A PLACE TO BELONG HERE.
I GUESS...
...I WAS WRONG.

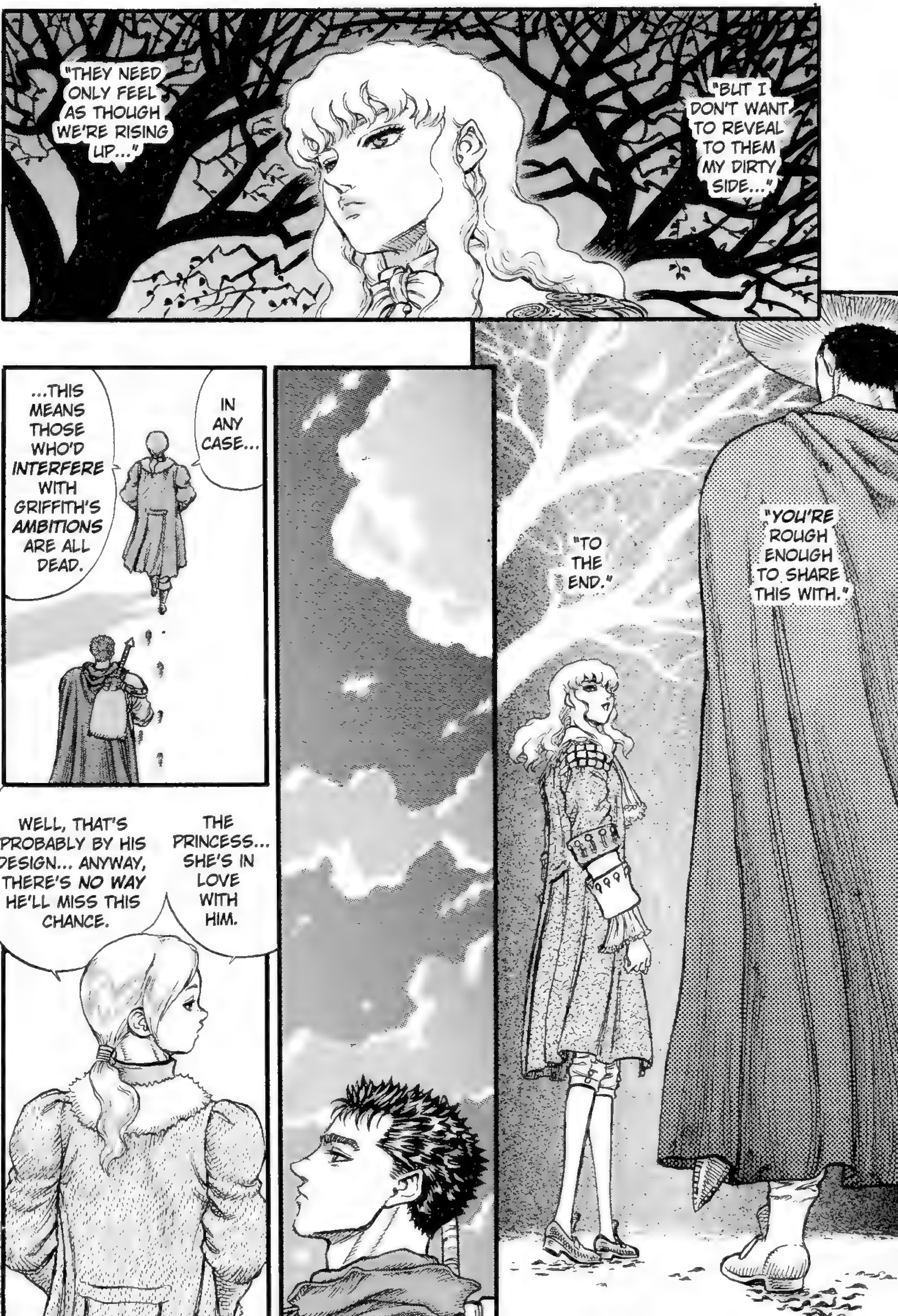
I'LL SEE YOU OFF.
I HOPE YOU FIND IT.
YOUR... SOMETHING.
HEY, I DO WANNA ASK YOU ONE THING.
EH?
WHAT'S UP WITH YOU AND CASCA?
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

EVER SINCE YOU TWO FELL OFF THAT CLIFF...
...IT'S LIKE YOU'VE GOTTEN A LOT CLOSER.
YOU REALLY THINK SO?
WELL... A LOT'S...
...HAPPENED WITH HER.
HMMM...
WHAT'S THAT LOOK FOR?
......
WHY NOT...
...TRY YOUR LUCK WITH HER?
HUH?
HOLD UP!!
THAT WAS RANDOM!!
WHAT MADE YOU SAY THAT?!
EVERY OLD DOG IN THE HAWK KNOWS THAT...
...SHE AND GRIFFITH...

SHE... CASCA...
CHANCES ARE...
...CAN'T BE WITH GRIFFITH.
HUH...?
LIKE YOU SAID, GRIFFITH ROSE UP FROM HAVING NOTHING...
...TO BE A TOP GENERAL OF MIDLAND.
THAT'S PRACTICALLY A MIRACLE ITSELF. ORDINARILY, YOU'D THROW YOUR HANDS UP AND CELEBRATE, WITHOUT HOPING FOR ANYTHING MORE.
BUT... HE WON'T STOP.
THE GOAL HE PURSUES...
...IS ONE OF A KIND.
THEY SAY THE KINGDOM PROBABLY WON'T SEE WAR FOR SOME TIME.
IN THAT CASE, EVEN GRIFFITH WON'T HAVE ANY OPPORTUNITIES TO SHINE MILITARILY.
HIS CHANCES FOR PROMOTION WILL BE SLIM.
EVEN IF HE'S A GENERAL, HE'S STILL A SOLDIER, AFTER ALL.
THERE'S NOTHING BEYOND THAT.
HE'LL NEED A TRUMP CARD.
FOR ONE LAST PUSH...
......
DON'T YOU GET IT?

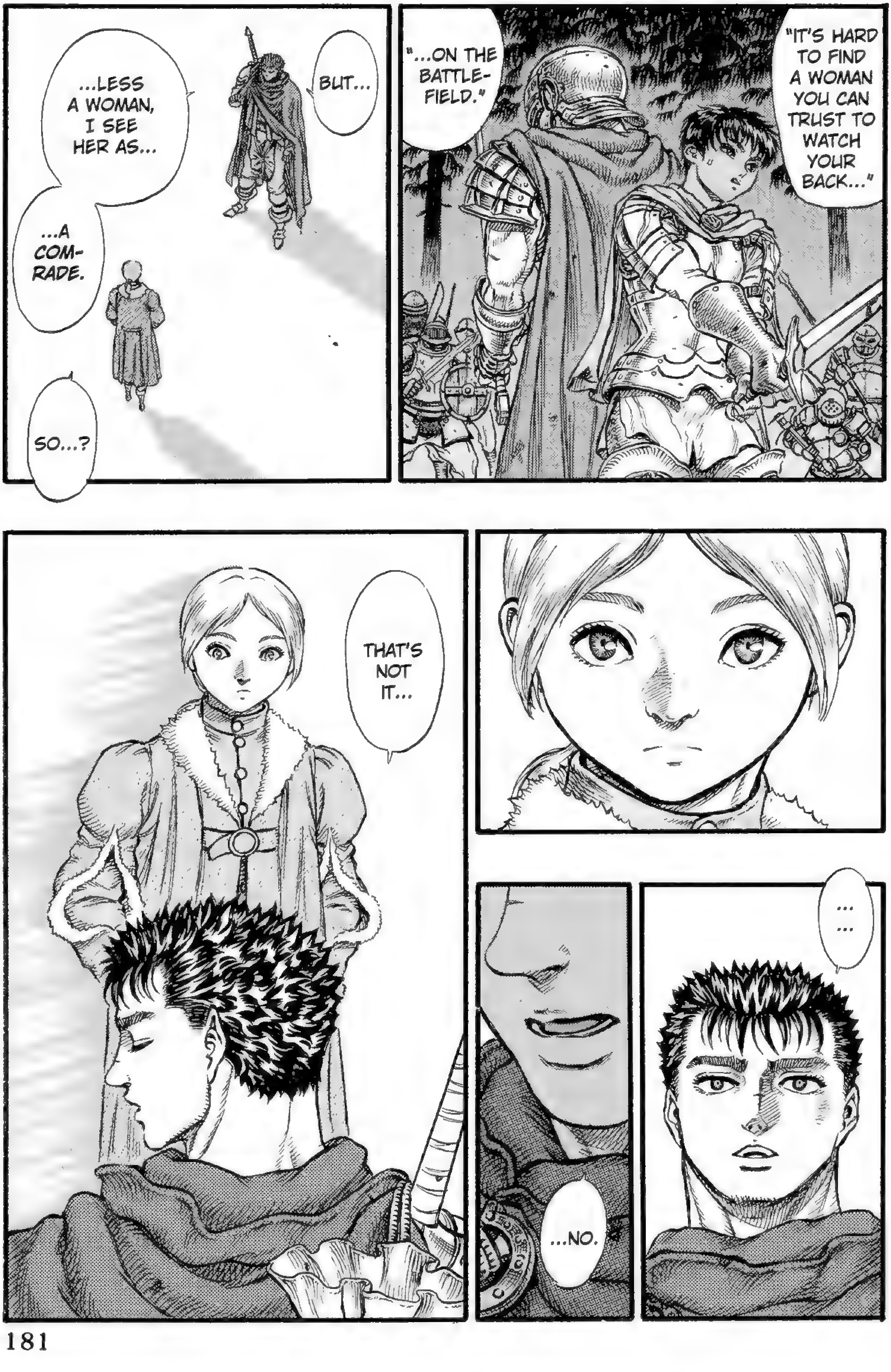
IT'S THE *PRINCESS.*
CATCHING *PRINCESS CHARLOTTE* IS THE FASTEST SHORTCUT TO GRIFFITH'S AMBITION.
IT'S ALSO THE *ONLY* WAY.
...
...
GRIFFITH IS NOW THE *WHITE PHOENIX GENERAL,* MIDLAND'S HEROIC SAVIOR.
BESIDE EVEN HER HIGHNESS HE'D APPEAR *QUITE* A WORTHY COMPANION.
AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, GENERAL JULIUS, NEXT IN LINE TO THE THRONE AFTER HER HIGHNESS ...
...AND HIS SON ADONIS, WHO WAS LIKELY TO MARRY HER, ARE NOW DEAD BY THE HANDS OF ANOTHER.

WHAT'S MORE, THE QUEEN, WELL KNOWN WITHIN THE COURT FOR HER SEVERITY, AND SEVERAL CONSERVATIVE MINISTERS...
...WERE MYSTERIOUSLY BURNED TO DEATH ON THE NIGHT OF THE ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON GRIFFITH.
THANKS TO THAT, THE MILITARY AWARD CEREMONY IS *STILL* POSTPONED.
GUTS, YOU...
... ...
NO...
OH, WELL!
"GUTS..."
"DON'T TELL THE OTHERS ABOUT THIS."
"IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T TRUST THEM."
"THE HAWKS ARE BOUND BY ONE FATE, AFTER ALL."


"BUT I DON'T WANT TO REVEAL TO THEM MY DIRTY SIDE..."
"THEY NEED ONLY FEEL AS THOUGH WE'RE RISING UP..."
"*YOU'RE* ROUGH ENOUGH TO SHARE THIS WITH."
"TO THE END."
IN ANY CASE...
...THIS MEANS THOSE WHO'D *INTERFERE* WITH GRIFFITH'S *AMBITIONS* ARE ALL DEAD.
THE PRINCESS... SHE'S IN LOVE WITH HIM.
WELL, THAT'S PROBABLY BY HIS DESIGN... ANYWAY, THERE'S *NO WAY* HE'LL MISS THIS CHANCE.

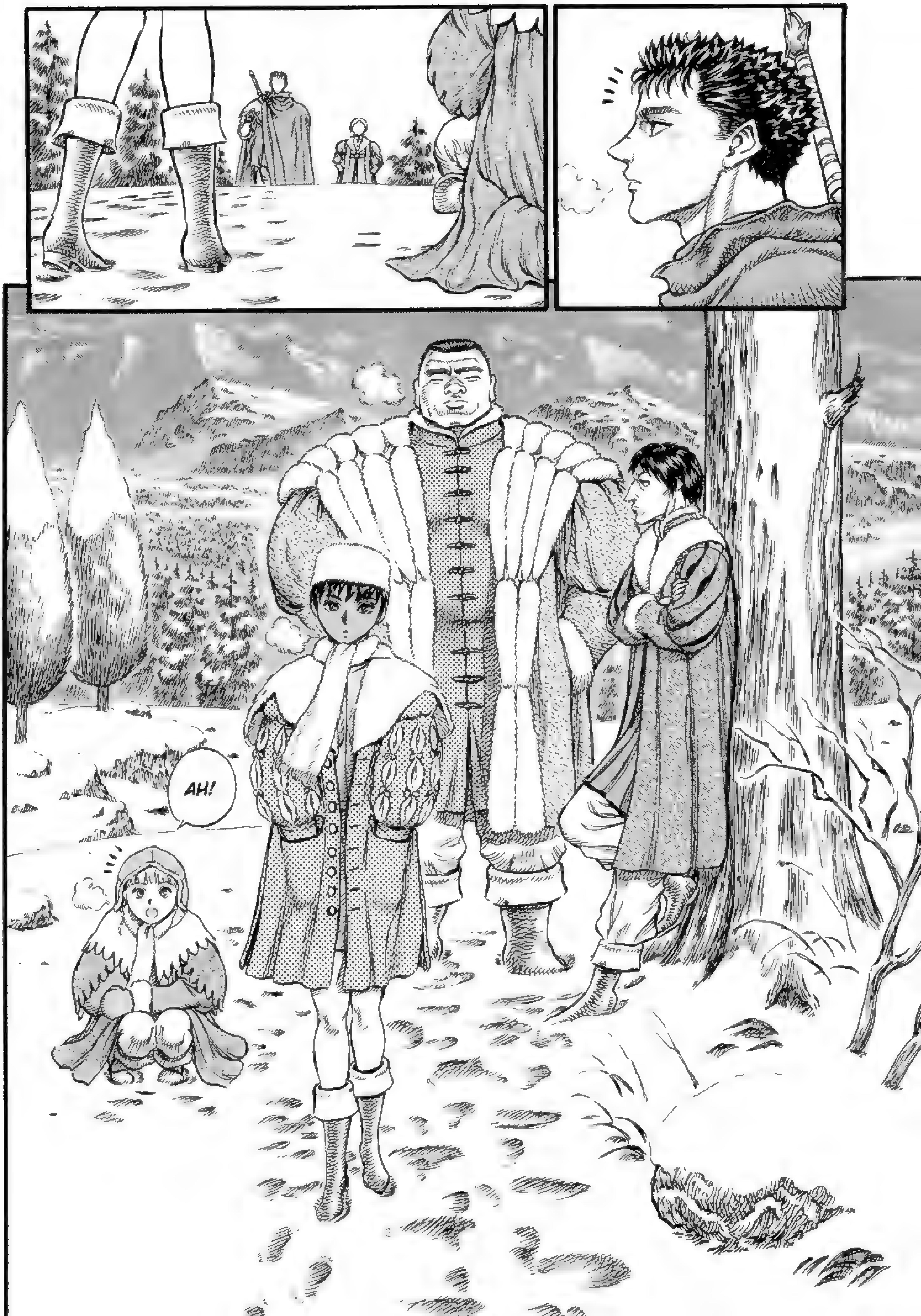
"AS FOR CASCA, GRIFFITH IS TRULY SPECIAL. IT GOES *BEYOND* ANY FEELINGS FOR HIM... HE RESCUED HER FROM *DESPAIR* AND GAVE HER A NEW LIFE."
"SO IT'S MORE THAN LOVE SHE FEELS FOR HIM..."
"IT'S MORE LIKE *WORSHIP.*"
"MOREOVER, BESIDE HIM IS THE WOMAN HE CAN'T AFFORD TO REFUSE IN FULFILLING HIS DREAM."
"THAT WOMAN CAN GRANT HIM THE THING HE MOST DESIRES, THE ONE THING CASCA HERSELF DEFINITELY CAN'T OFFER HIM."
YET DESPITE ALL HER *EFFORTS,* CAN SHE FIND HAPPINESS...
...BEING A WOMAN LONGING FOR A MAN SHE CAN'T *EVER* HAVE?
IF SHE LOVES HIM...
...SHOULDN'T SHE WANT TO BE HELD BY HIM?

THAT MUST BE UNBEARABLE...
...DEALING WITH THAT.
…… ……
SO...
...WHAT ABOUT CASCA?
EVER THINK YOU'D...
...LIKE TO HOLD HER?
... ...
I... ...
... ...
SHE'S A FINE WOMAN.
SHE'S A LOT BETTER THAN THOSE NOBLE GIRLS WHO ONLY KNOW HOW TO DRESS UP.

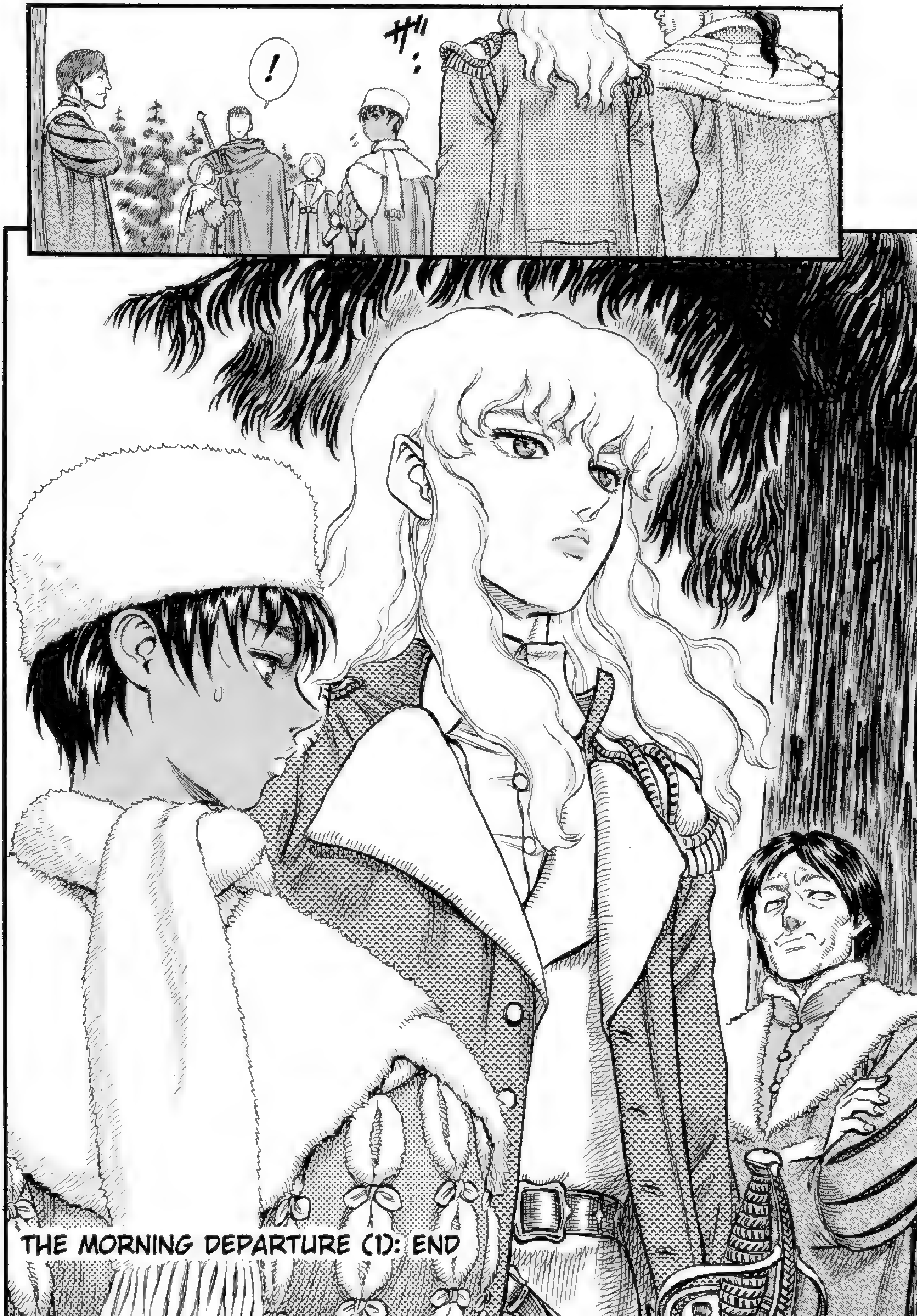

"IT'S HARD TO FIND A WOMAN YOU CAN TRUST TO WATCH YOUR BACK..."
"...ON THE BATTLEFIELD."
BUT...
...LESS A WOMAN, I SEE HER AS...
...A COMRADE.
SO...?
......
...NO.
THAT'S NOT IT...

THAT'S WHY...
...RIGHT NOW...
"THE ONE WHO HAS HER EYE..."
"...IS GRIFFITH."
...I'M NO GOOD FOR HER...
...LIKE THIS.

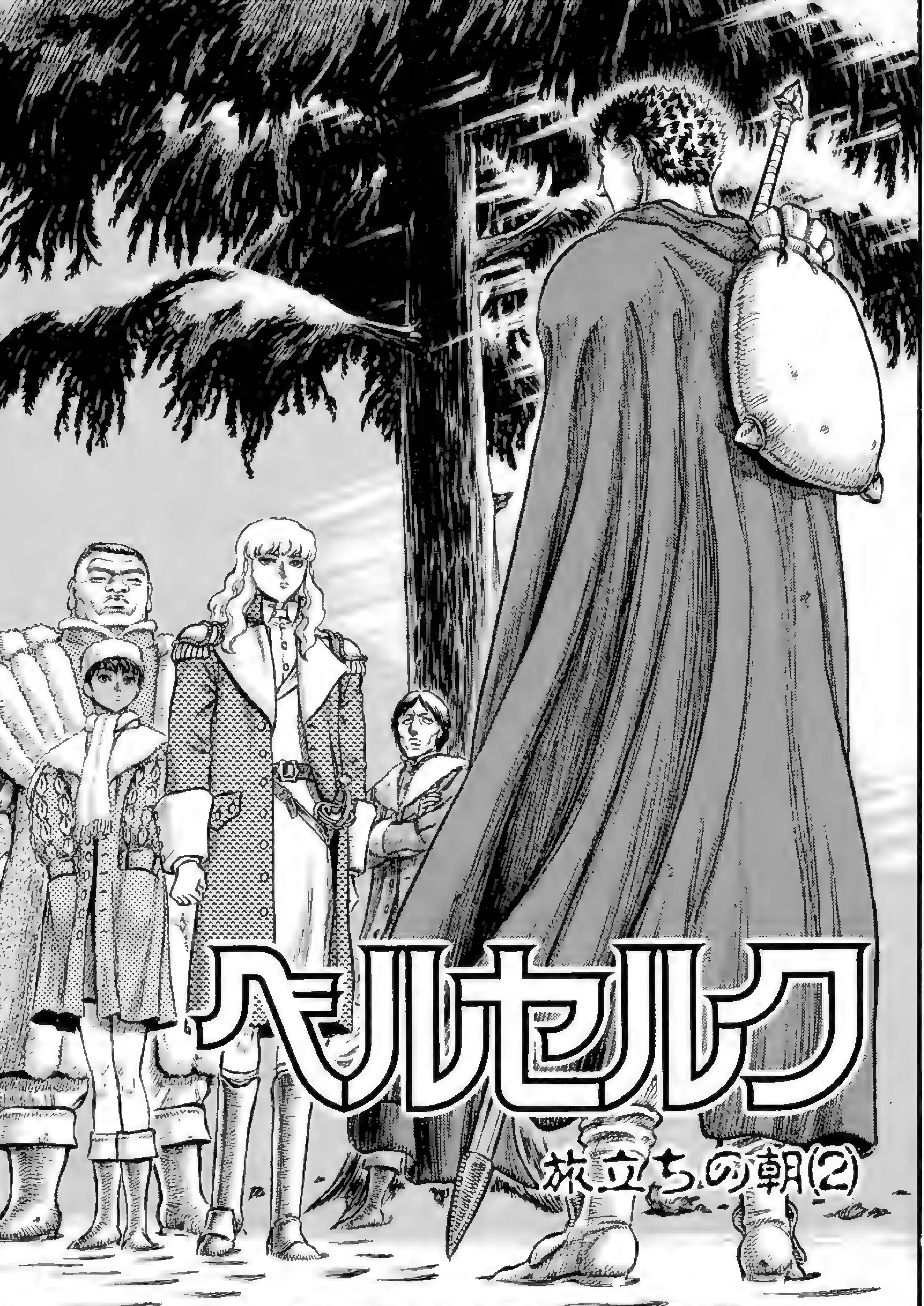
……
……
GOTCHA.
IT REALLY SEEMED THERE WAS *HOPE* FOR YOU, THOUGH.
FOR NOW…
…MY HANDS ARE FULL WITH JUST *ME*.
THIS IS FAR ENOUGH.


AH!

YOU GUYS ...
HOW COULD YOU, GUTS?!
ガシ
LEAVING WITHOUT SAYING ANY-THING!!
WHY?!
DON'T YOU LIKE... THE BAND OF THE HAWK?!
RICKERT ...



THE MORNING DEPARTURE (1): END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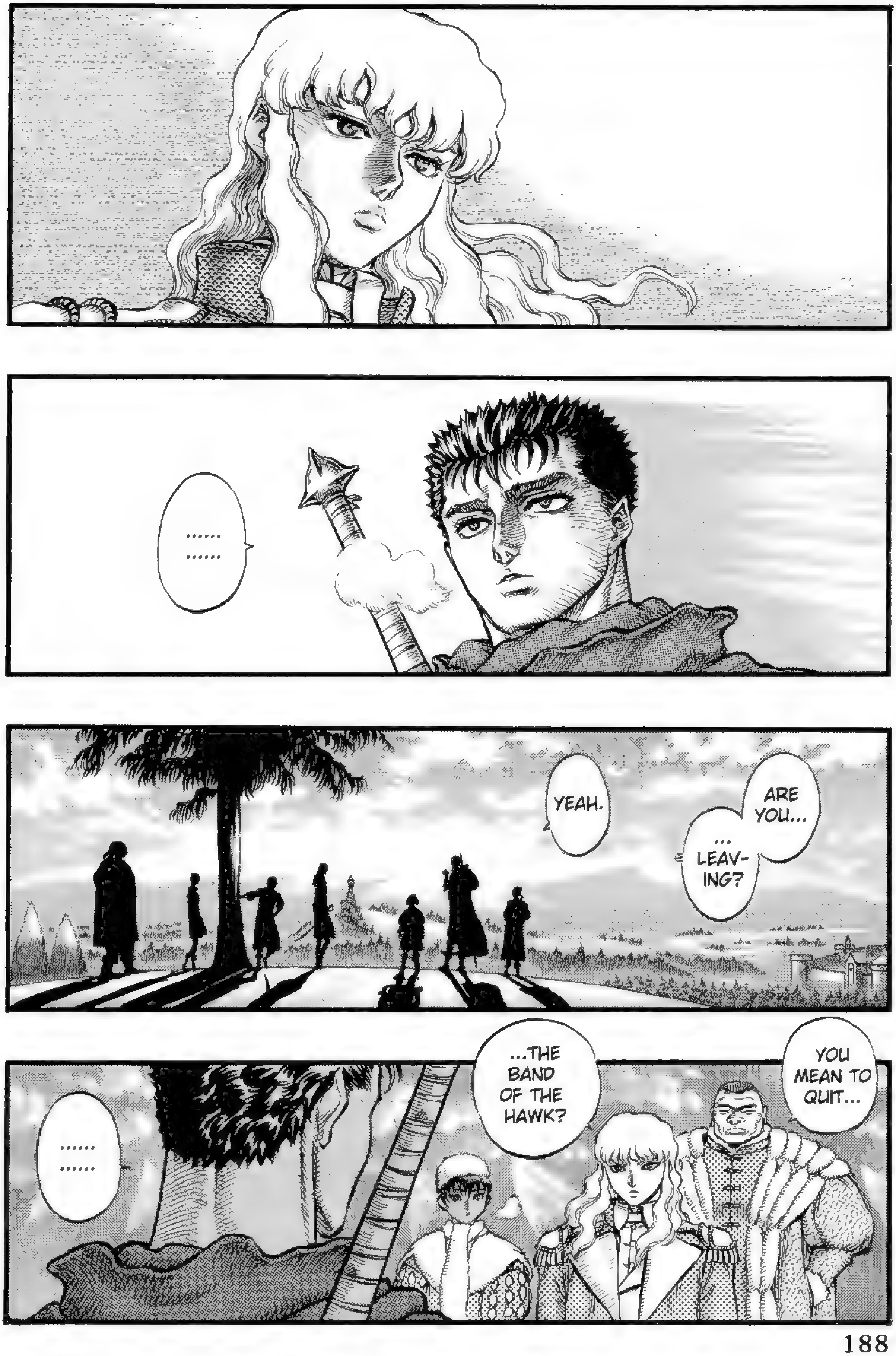
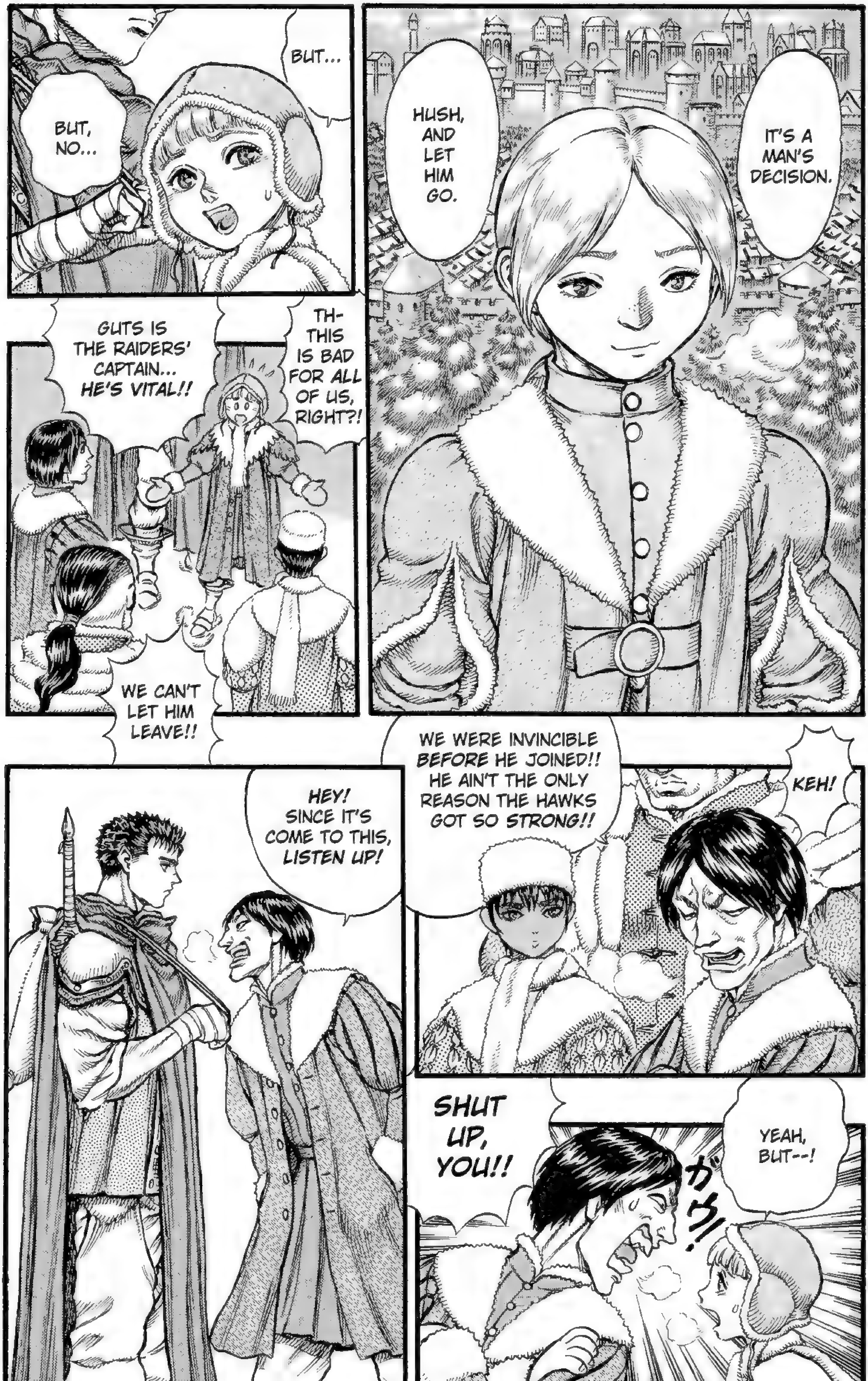
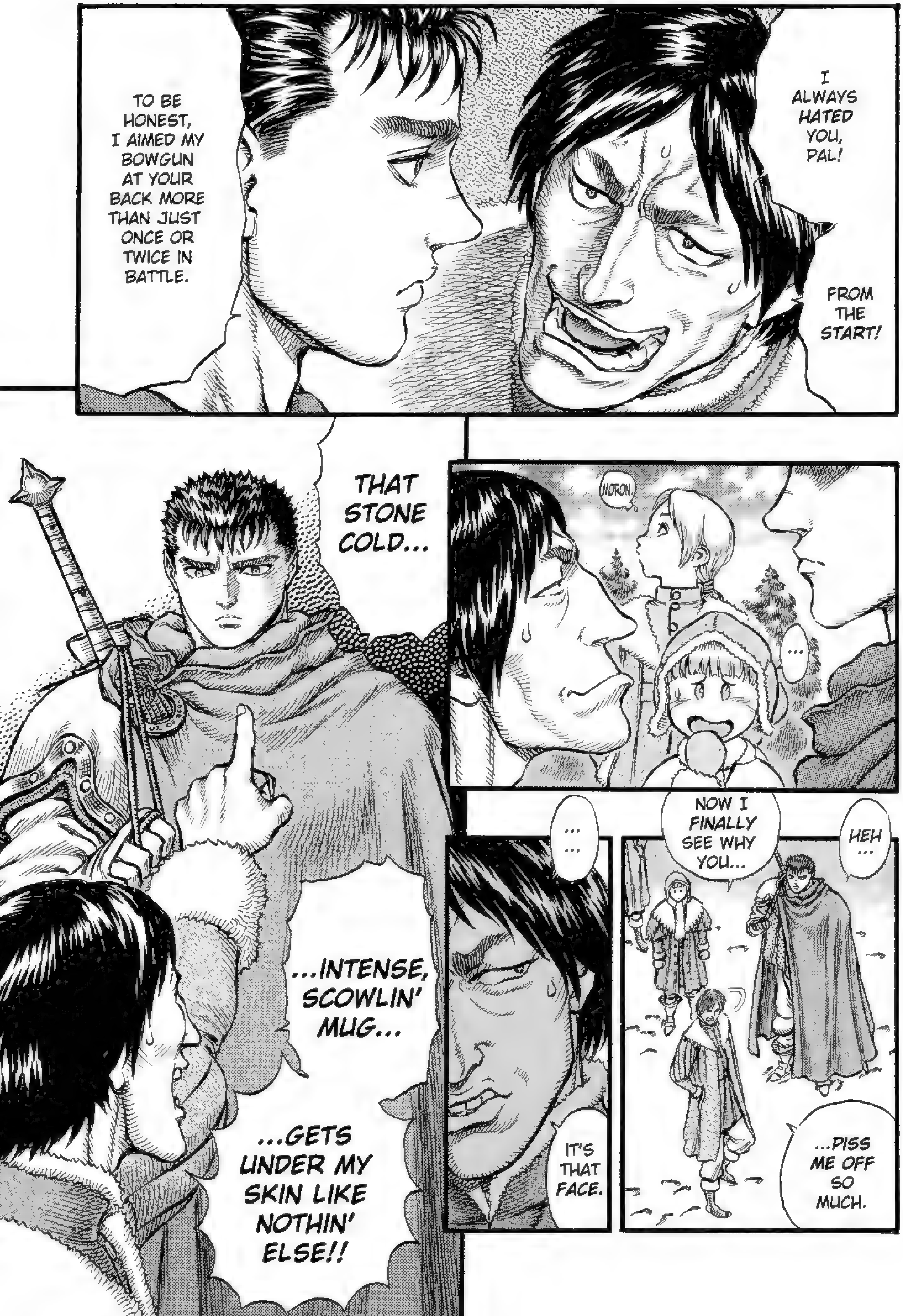
THE MORNING DEPARTURE, CHAPTER 2

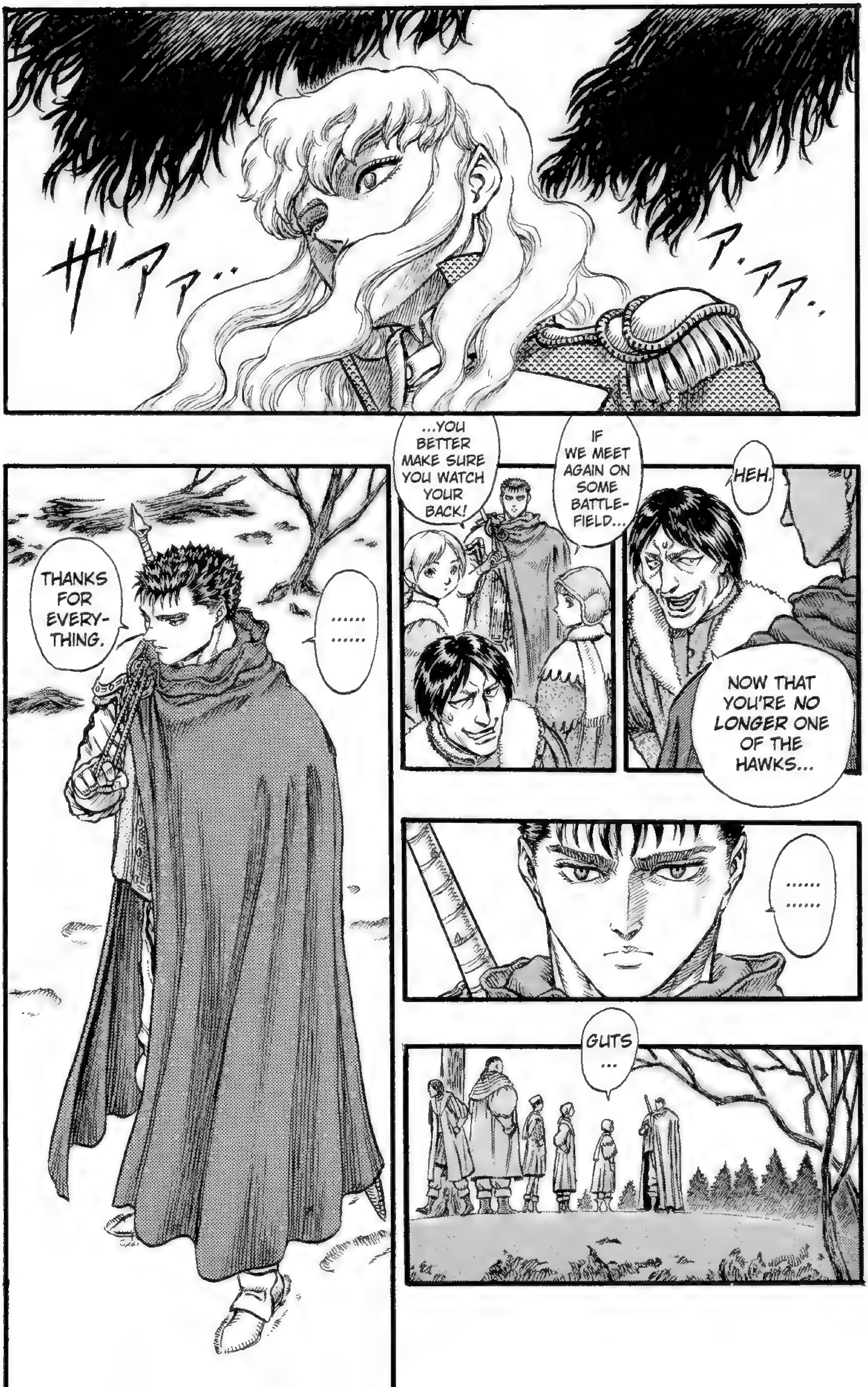

……
……
ARE YOU...
...LEAVING?
YEAH.
YOU MEAN TO QUIT...
...THE BAND OF THE HAWK?
……
……

I'M SORRY......
TELL US WHY!!
THAT DOESN'T EXPLAIN ANYTHING!!
AREN'T THE *HAWKS* JUST LIKE *FAMILY* TO YOU, GUTS?!
WHY WOULD YOU THROW THAT AWAY?!
CUT IT OUT, RICKERT.


IT'S A MAN'S DECISION.
HUSH, AND LET HIM GO.
BUT...
BUT, NO...
TH-THIS IS BAD FOR *ALL* OF US, RIGHT?!
GUTS IS THE RAIDERS' CAPTAIN... *HE'S VITAL!!*
WE CAN'T LET HIM LEAVE!!
KEH!
WE WERE INVINCIBLE *BEFORE* HE JOINED!! HE AIN'T THE ONLY REASON THE HAWKS GOT SO *STRONG!!*
YEAH, BUT--!
ガウ!!
SHUT UP, YOU!!
HEY! SINCE IT'S COME TO THIS, *LISTEN UP!*


I ALWAYS HATED YOU, PAL!
FROM THE START!
TO BE HONEST, I AIMED MY BOWGUN AT YOUR BACK MORE THAN JUST ONCE OR TWICE IN BATTLE.
MORON.
...
HEH...
NOW I FINALLY SEE WHY YOU...
...PISS ME OFF SO MUCH.
......
IT'S THAT FACE.
THAT STONE COLD...
...INTENSE, SCOWLIN' MUG...
...GETS UNDER MY SKIN LIKE NOTHIN' ELSE!!

THAT *FACE*... LIKE YOU'RE IN SOME KINDA *AGONY* OR *SOMETHIN'*!!
LIKE YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WALKIN' SOME PATH OF PROFOUND *SUFFERIN'* THAT NO ONE UNDERSTANDS!!
LIKE *YOU'RE* THE ONLY ONE WHO'S SPECIAL!!
DON'T BE SO *PROUD*!!!
I DON'T BUY IT.
YOU AIN'T *SPECIAL*.
YOU CAN...
...NEVER BECOME GRIFFITH.
!
......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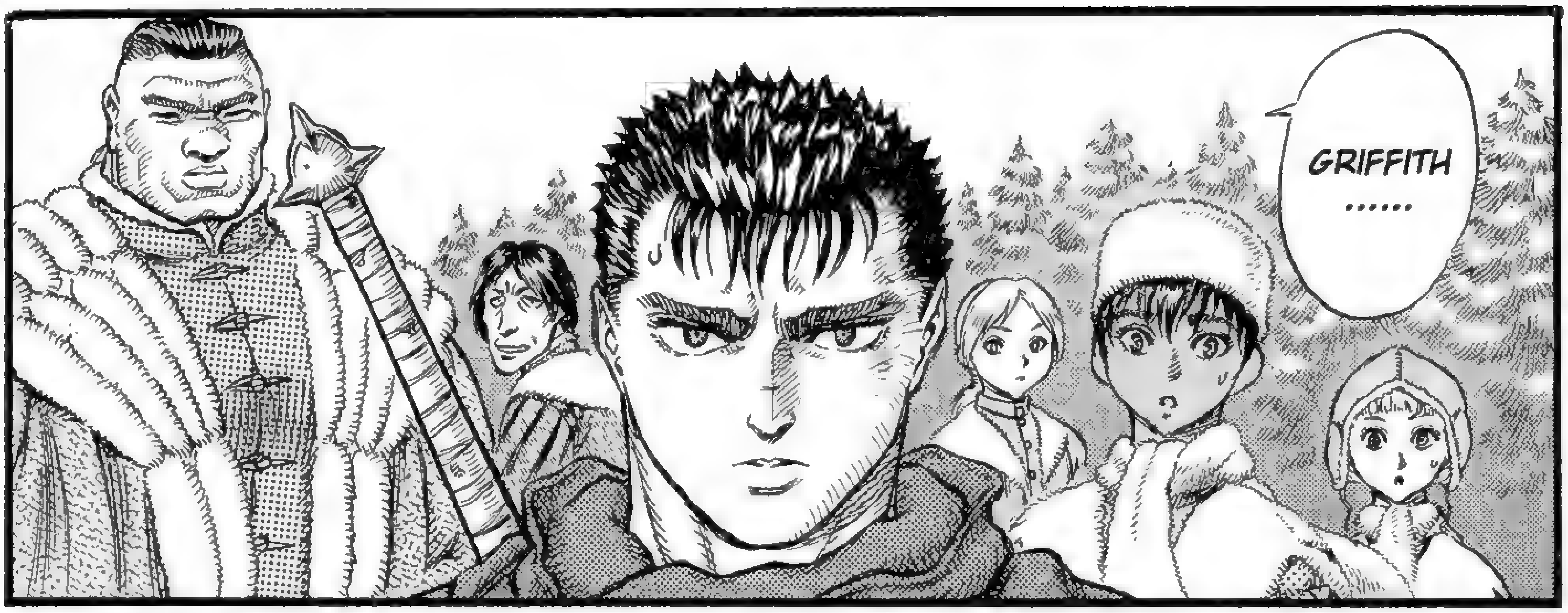
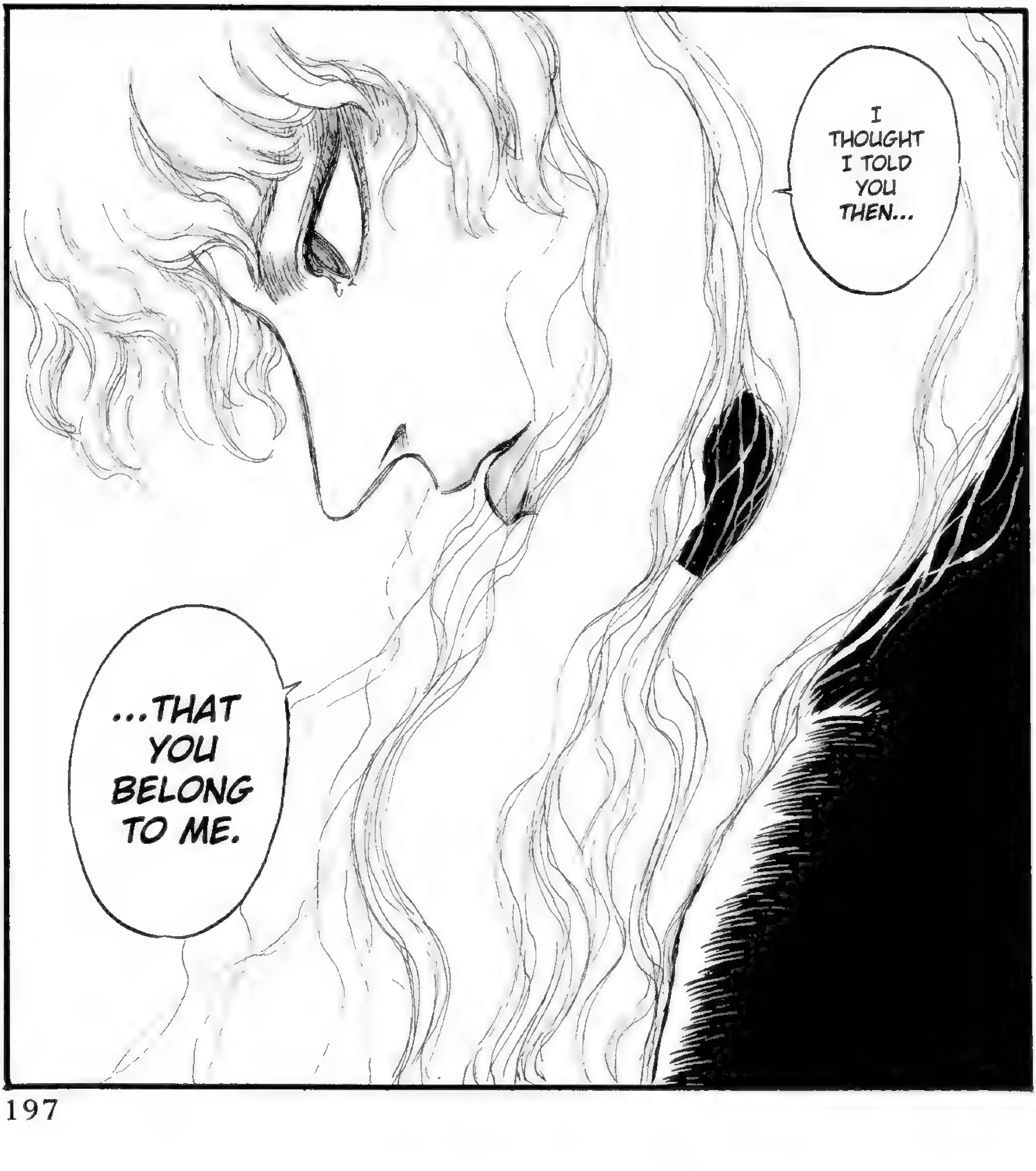
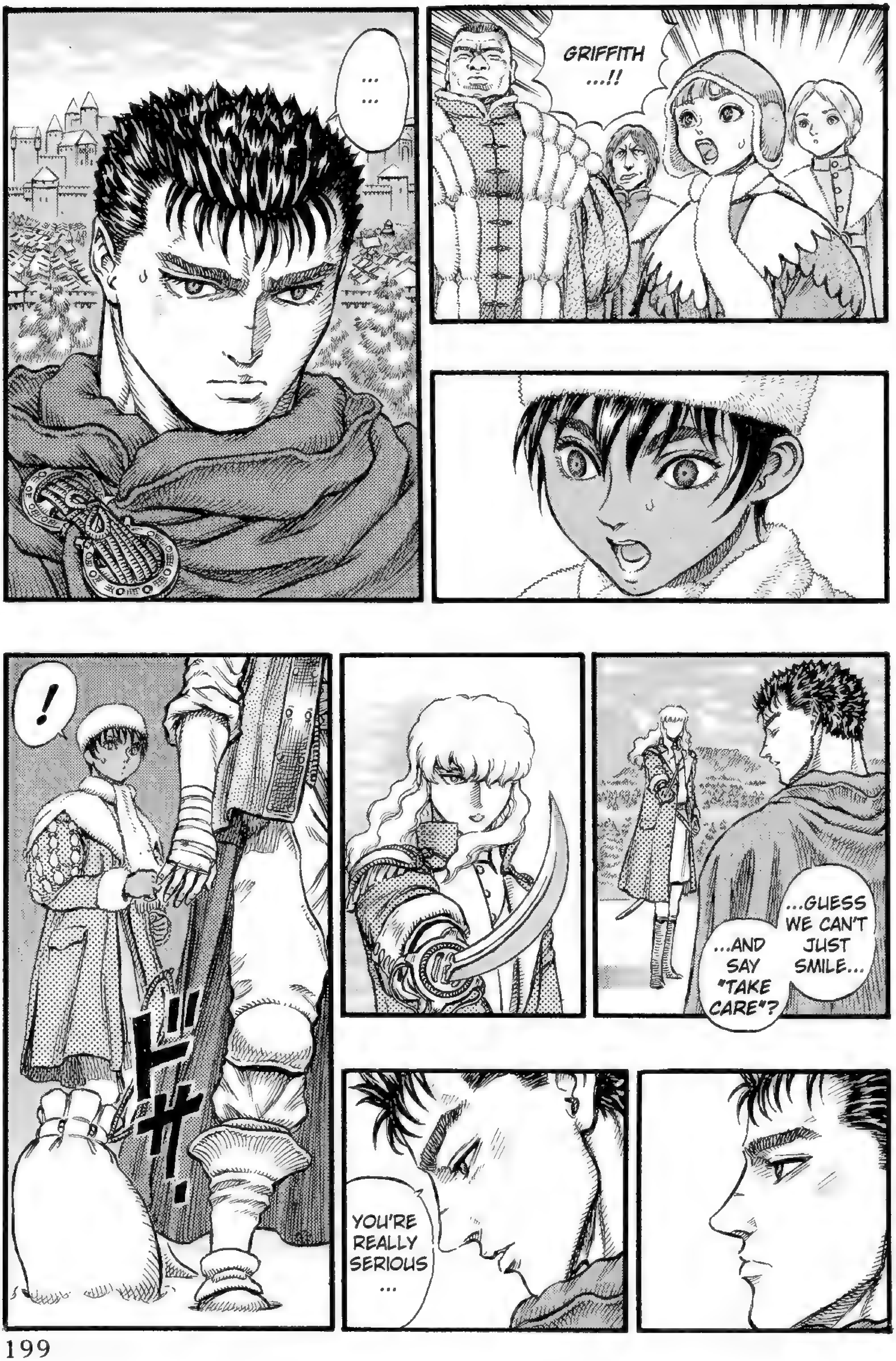
ア‥アア‥
HEH.
NOW THAT YOU'RE NO LONGER ONE OF THE HAWKS...
IF WE MEET AGAIN ON SOME BATTLEFIELD...
...YOU BETTER MAKE SURE YOU WATCH YOUR BACK!
......
......
GUTS...
......
......
THANKS FOR EVERYTHING.

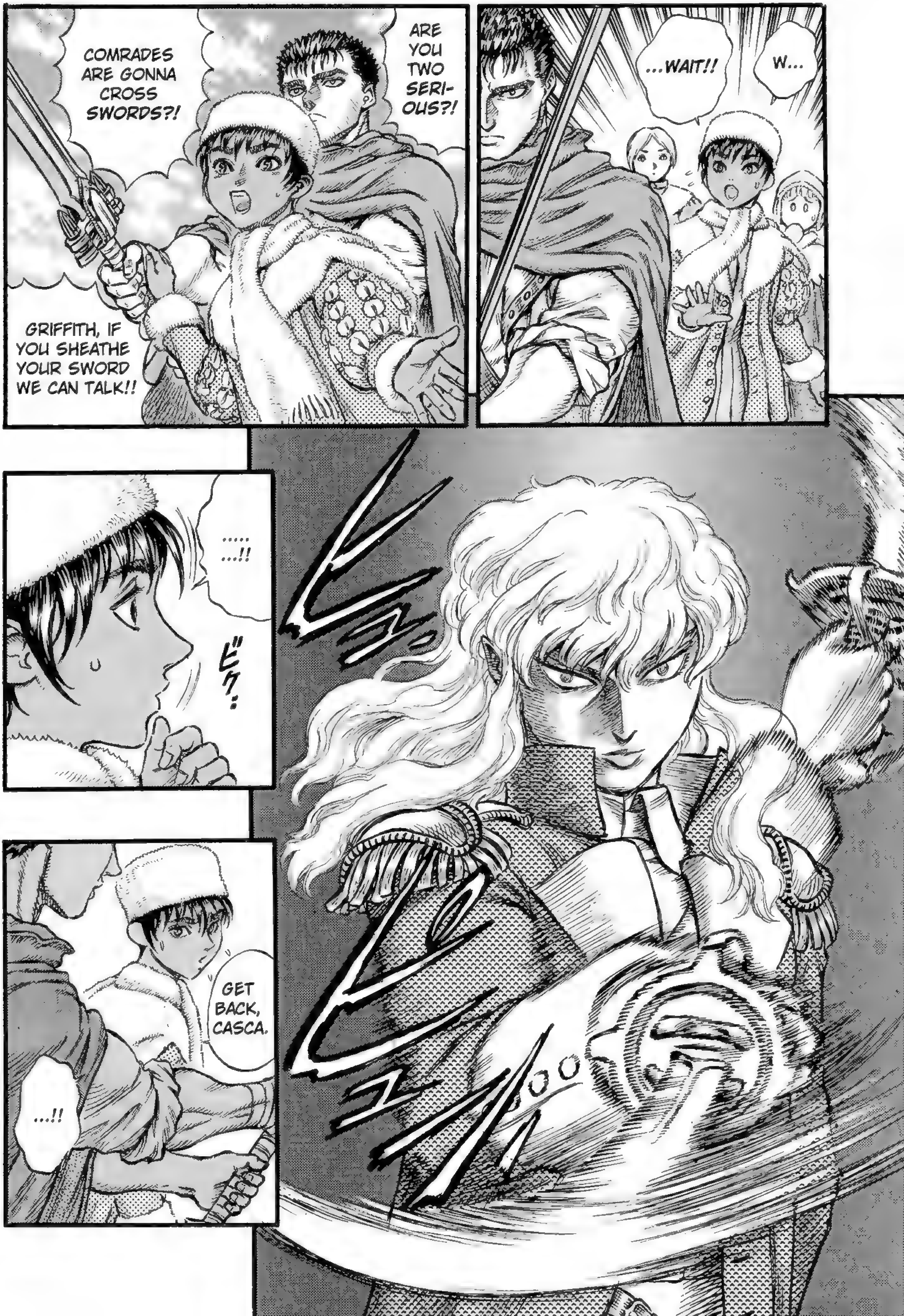
"CASCA..."
"...CAN'T BE WITH GRIFFITH. CHANCES ARE..."
"...WHY NOT TRY YOUR LUCK WITH HER?"
"EVER THINK..."
"...YOU'D LIKE TO HOLD HER?"


GRIFFITH ......

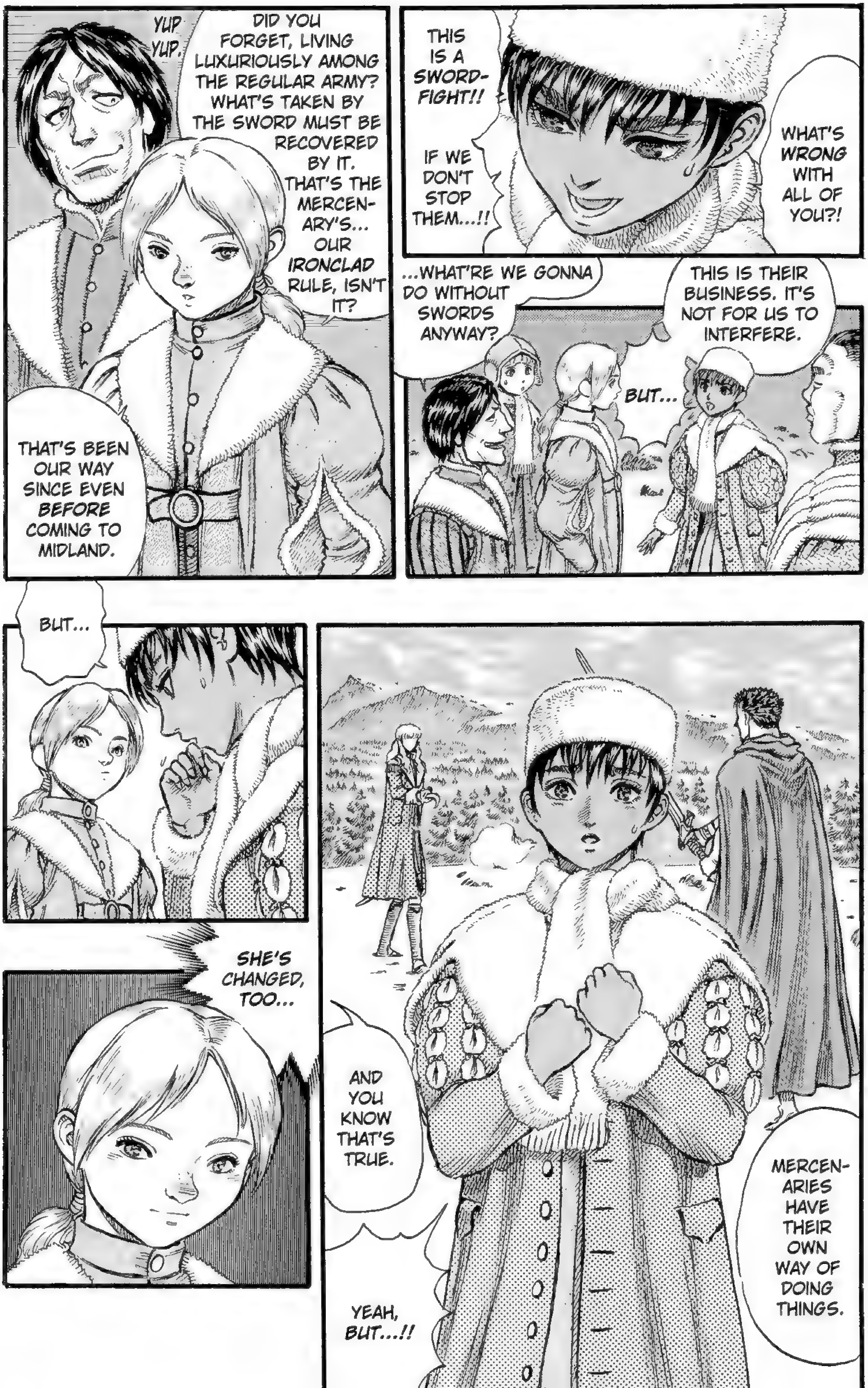

I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU THEN...
...THAT YOU BELONG TO ME.

I WON YOU WITH THIS.
YOUR FIGHT AND YOUR DEATH, I HOLD BOTH.
IF YOU WANT TO LEAVE MY GRASP, THEN IT'LL BE THE SAME AS THAT TIME...
WREST YOURSELF AWAY BY YOUR SWORD.


GRIFFITH ...!!
...
...
...GUESS WE CAN'T JUST SMILE...
...AND SAY "TAKE CARE"?
YOU'RE REALLY SERIOUS ...
!
ドサッ!


W...
...WAIT!!
ARE YOU TWO SERIOUS?!
COMRADES ARE GONNA CROSS SWORDS?!
GRIFFITH, IF YOU SHEATHE YOUR SWORD WE CAN TALK!!
....!!
ビクッ
GET BACK, CASCA.
...!!

DON'T GET IN OUR WAY.
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?!
IF YOU REALLY DO THIS, BOTH OF YOU...!!
グッ
!
P-PIPPIN?! WHAT'RE YOU--?! LET ME...!!
THEY HAVE TO DO THIS, NOW...
HEHEH... SERVES HIM RIGHT.
......


THIS IS A SWORD-FIGHT!!
IF WE DON'T STOP THEM...!!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH ALL OF YOU?!
YUP YUP.
DID YOU FORGET, LIVING LUXURIOUSLY AMONG THE REGULAR ARMY? WHAT'S TAKEN BY THE SWORD MUST BE RECOVERED BY IT. THAT'S THE MERCENARY'S... OUR IRONCLAD RULE, ISN'T IT?
THAT'S BEEN OUR WAY SINCE EVEN BEFORE COMING TO MIDLAND.
THIS IS THEIR BUSINESS. IT'S NOT FOR US TO INTERFERE.
...WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO WITHOUT SWORDS ANYWAY?
BUT...
MERCENARIES HAVE THEIR OWN WAY OF DOING THINGS.
YEAH, BUT...!!
AND YOU KNOW THAT'S TRUE.
BUT...
SHE'S CHANGED, TOO...

THE OLD CASCA WOULD HAVE NEVER CARED EVEN IF IT CAME DOWN TO COMRADES GETTING HURT.
I BET SHE WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE FALTERED AT LOSING HER OWN LIFE IF IT HAD BEEN GRIFFITH'S WILL.
TO CASCA, HIS WORD WAS GOSPEL.
NO.
MAYBE THAT'S STILL THE TRUTH...
BUT...
...IS SHE HERSELF EVEN AWARE THAT SHE'S BEGUN TO CHANGE?

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE STARING DOWN AN ENEMY. MAKES SENSE...
YOUR EXPECTATIONS-- YOUR CONFIDENCE IN ME AS YOUR SOLDIER IS VANISHING INTO THIN AIR, SO I CAN'T COMPLAIN IF YOU RESENT ME.
BUT STILL...
...EVEN IF...
...I'M HATED OR TREATED LIKE A TRAITOR...
SOMEONE WHO WOULD NEVER DEPEND UPON ANOTHER'S DREAM... SOMEONE WHO WOULDN'T BE COMPELLED BY ANYONE, BUT WOULD DETERMINE AND PURSUE HIS OWN REASON TO LIVE...

SO THAT'S WHY...
AND SHOULD ANYONE TRAMPLE THAT DREAM, YOU WOULD OPPOSE HIM BODY AND SOUL...EVEN IF THE THREAT WERE ME, MYSELF...
WHAT I THINK A FRIEND IS, IS THAT... ONE WHO IS MY "EQUAL."
THAT'S WHY...
...I HAVE...
...TO GO.
HEH!
MAYBE LOSIN' AN ARM'LL WAKE HIS ASS UP.
THESE PAST THREE YEARS GUTS HAS CUT HIS OWN PATH THROUGH THE BATTLEFIELD AS CAPTAIN OF THE RAIDERS.
HE'S EXPOSED HIMSELF TO DANGER MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE IN THE BAND OF THE HAWK... GRIFFITH IS CERTAINLY A GENIUS WHEN IT COMES TO SWORD TECHNIQUE...
WILL IT BE THAT SIMPLE?

...BUT GUTS' SKILLS HAVE BEEN SO WELL HONED ON THE LINE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH THAT YOU COULD SAY HIS IS A SWORD OF CARNAGE!!
SURE ENOUGH, GRIFFITH'S FACE LACKS ITS USUAL COMPOSURE ...
THEIR STRENGTH IS EQUALLY MATCHED!!

THE MORNING DEPARTURE (2): END

ベルセルク

ベルセルク

THE MORNING DEPARTURE, CHAPTER 3

旅立ちの朝(3)

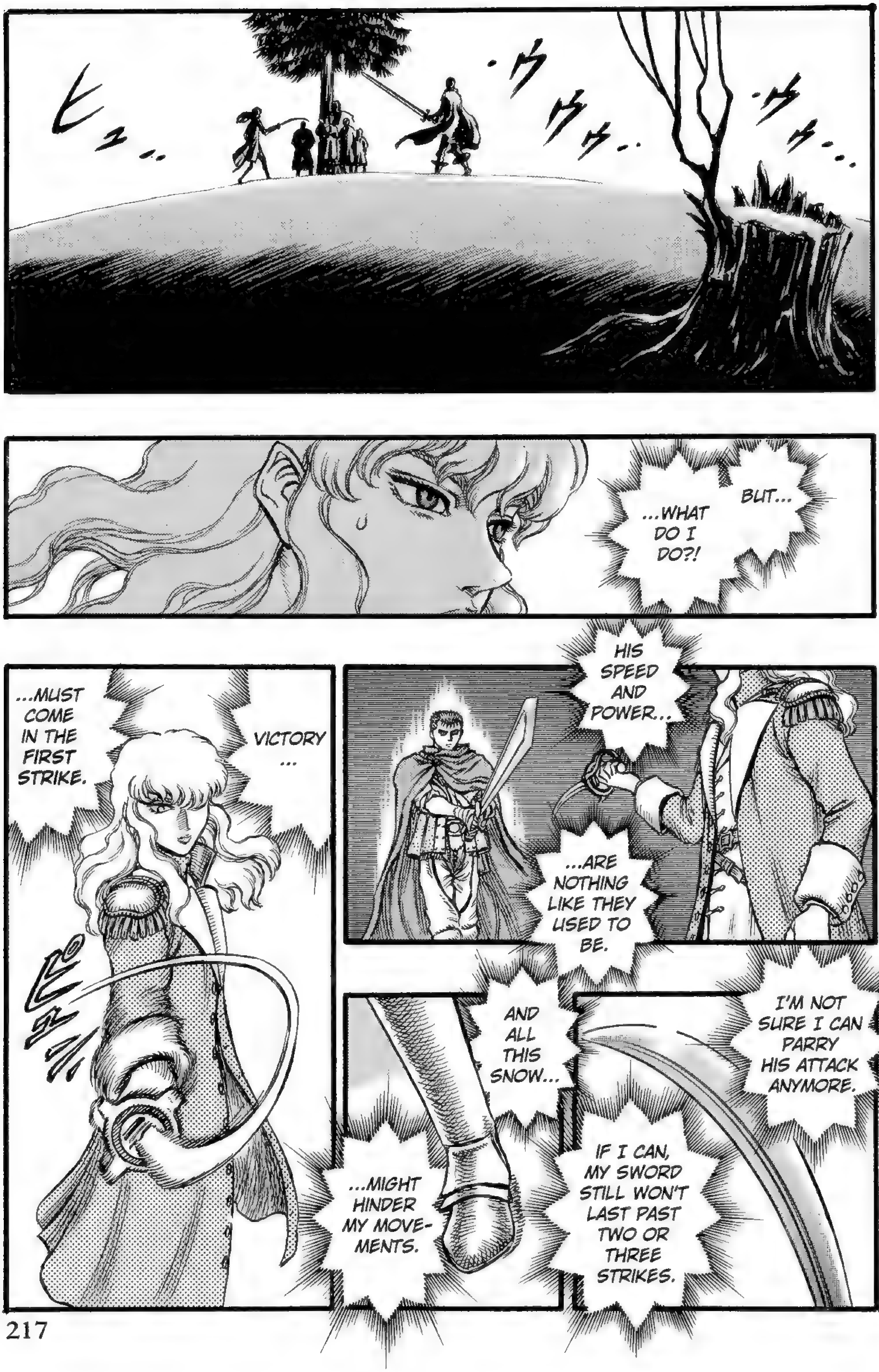
IT'S ODD.
I'M FEELING STRANGELY CALM.
YET I'M UP AGAINST GRIFFITH...
SO THERE'S NO WAY I CAN DROP MY GUARD.
THREE YEARS AGO, THAT DAY...
...WAS LIKE THIS ONE.
IT ALL STARTED WITH A DUEL, NOW IT ENDS WITH ONE...
FINE BY ME.
IT'S MUCH MORE FITTING THAN SOME HALF-HEARTED FAREWELL.
THIS SAYS TO ME...
...I'M STILL WORTH SPILLIN' BLOOD OVER IN YOUR EYES.

.....
HE'S BECOME MUCH STRONGER THESE PAST THREE YEARS!!
UNFATHOMABLY...!!
GUTS IS STRONG!!
BUT THEN...
EVEN SO, IT'S GRIFFITH...
GRIFFITH CAN!!
I'M SURE GRIFFITH CAN STOP HIM!!
YES.
ギュ
THEN EVERYTHING WILL STAY AS IT HAS BEEN.....

... ...
IS THAT...
...MY WISH?
DO I WANT...
...DO I WANT HIM...
...TO STAY?

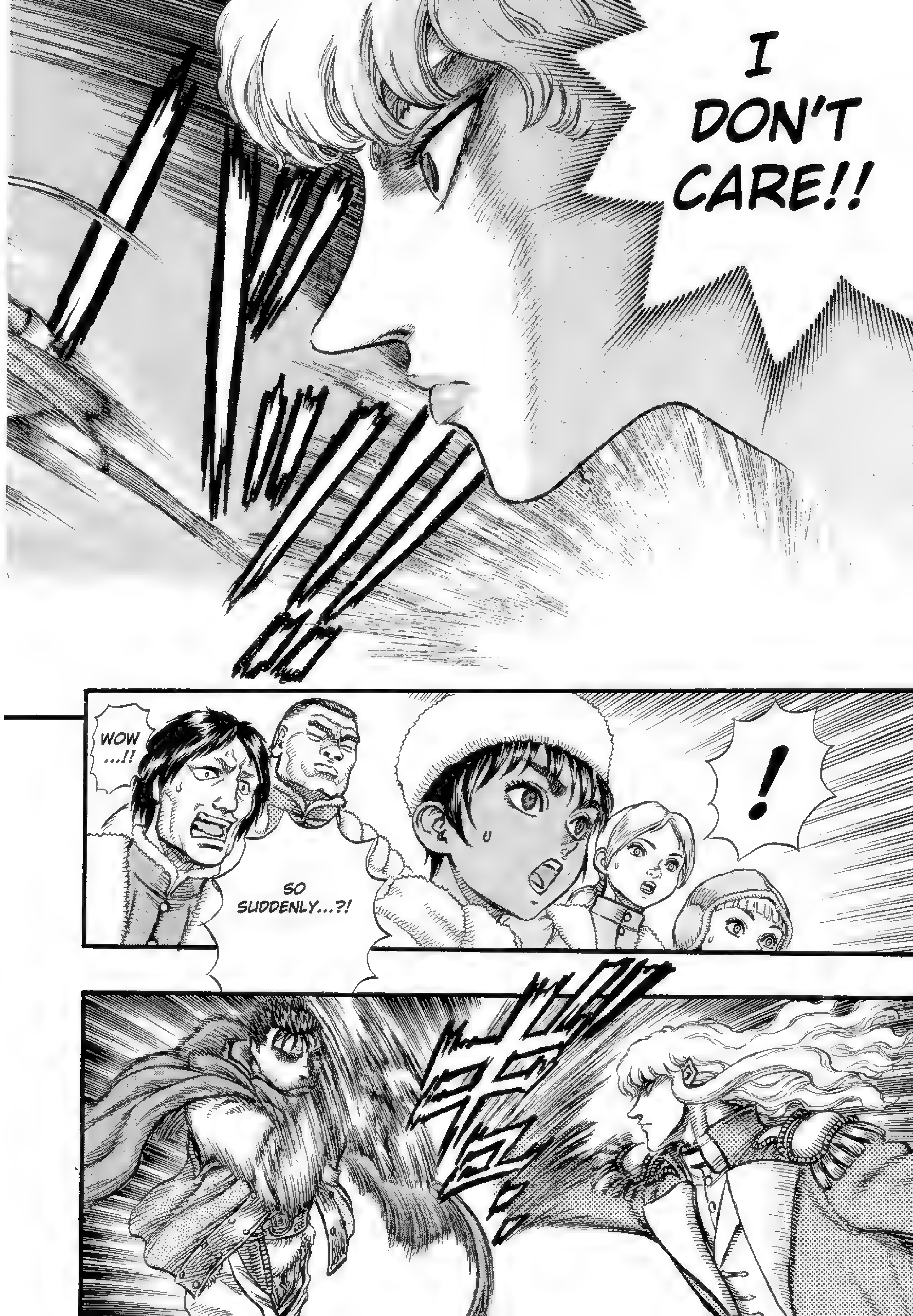
……
……
I CAN'T SENSE YOUR TYPICAL BRAZEN FIGHTING SPIRIT. YOUR EYES REMAIN CALM.
AND YET, THEY'RE POISED, DEVOID OF PRECARIOUSNESS.
SO THAT'S HOW FIRM YOU ARE IN YOUR RESOLVE.

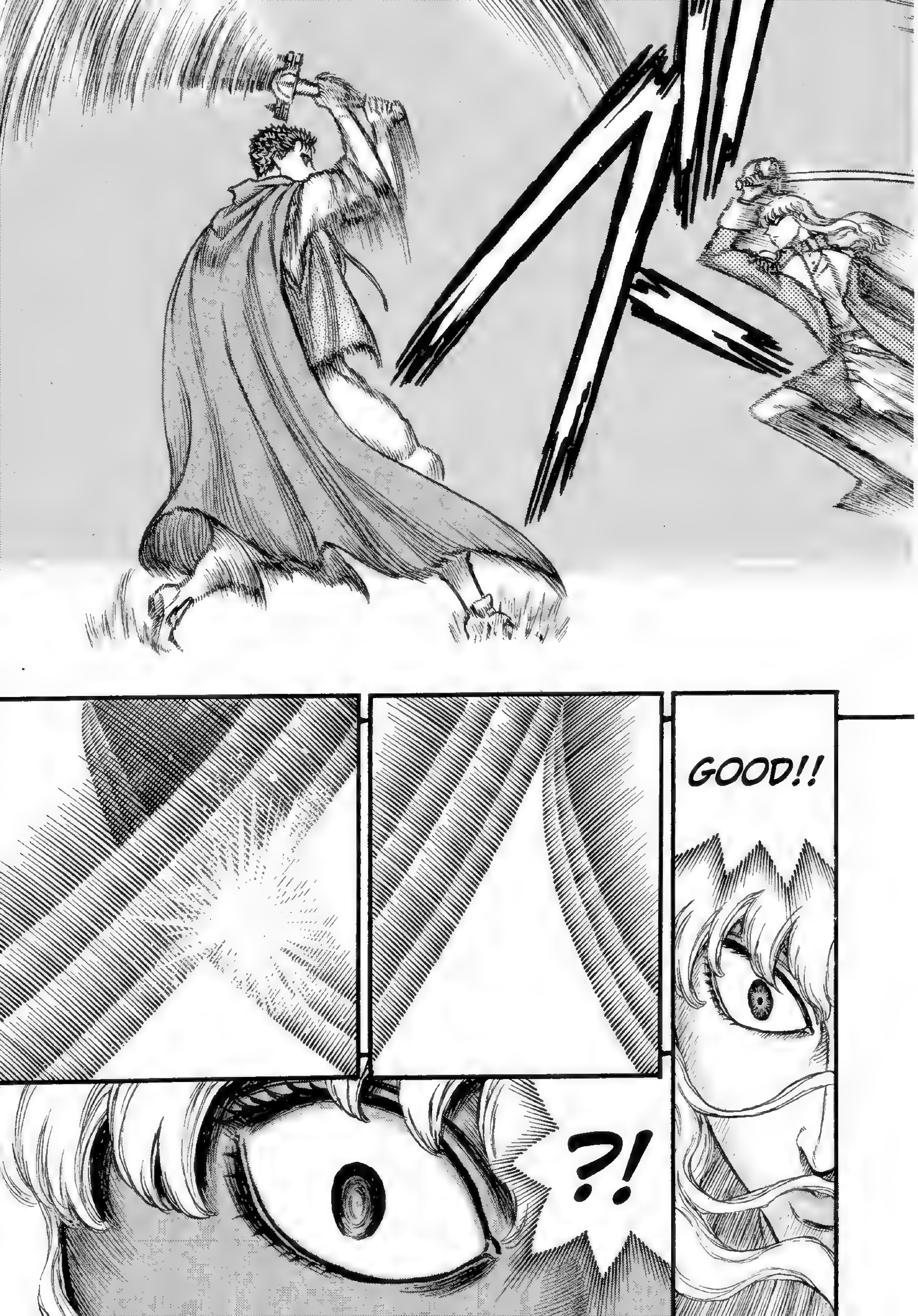
DO YOU WANT TO GO?!
IS THIS...
...HOW BADLY YOU WANT TO LEAVE MY GRASP?!
...YOU CAN'T.
YOU CAN'T!!
I WON'T HAVE IT!!
I WON'T LET YOU!!


ヒュ..
ゥ ウゥ..
ゥ ゥ...
BUT...
...WHAT DO I DO?!
HIS SPEED AND POWER...
...ARE NOTHING LIKE THEY USED TO BE.
I'M NOT SURE I CAN PARRY HIS ATTACK ANYMORE.
IF I CAN, MY SWORD STILL WON'T LAST PAST TWO OR THREE STRIKES.
AND ALL THIS SNOW...
...MIGHT HINDER MY MOVEMENTS.
VICTORY...
...MUST COME IN THE FIRST STRIKE.

THE INSTANT HIS BLADE FALLS...
...I'LL DEFLECT IT...
...AND SLICE INTO THE TOP OF HIS SHOULDER!!
MY SPEED AND TIMING CAN'T BE OFF EVEN SLIGHTLY... IT'S A STRIKE I WON'T BE ABLE TO CONSTRAIN.
THERE'S NO OTHER TECHNIQUE I CAN USE TO BEAT HIM NOW... IF SUCCESSFUL, EVEN GUTS WOULDN'T ESCAPE UNHARMED.
NO. IF IN THE INSTANT OUR SWORDS MEET, THE PRESSURE FROM HIS ALTERS THE ARC OF MINE EVEN JUST A LITTLE...
...I MIGHT REALLY KILL HIM!!

EVEN THEN...
IF I CAN'T HAVE HIM...!!
ジリ…
ピクッ!


I DON'T CARE!!
WOW ...!!
SO SUDDENLY...?!
!


GOOD!!
?!

DEFLECT IT AND ...?!
ドゴッ!

ウワァァァ!!
ダッ
GRIFFITH!!
ザッ

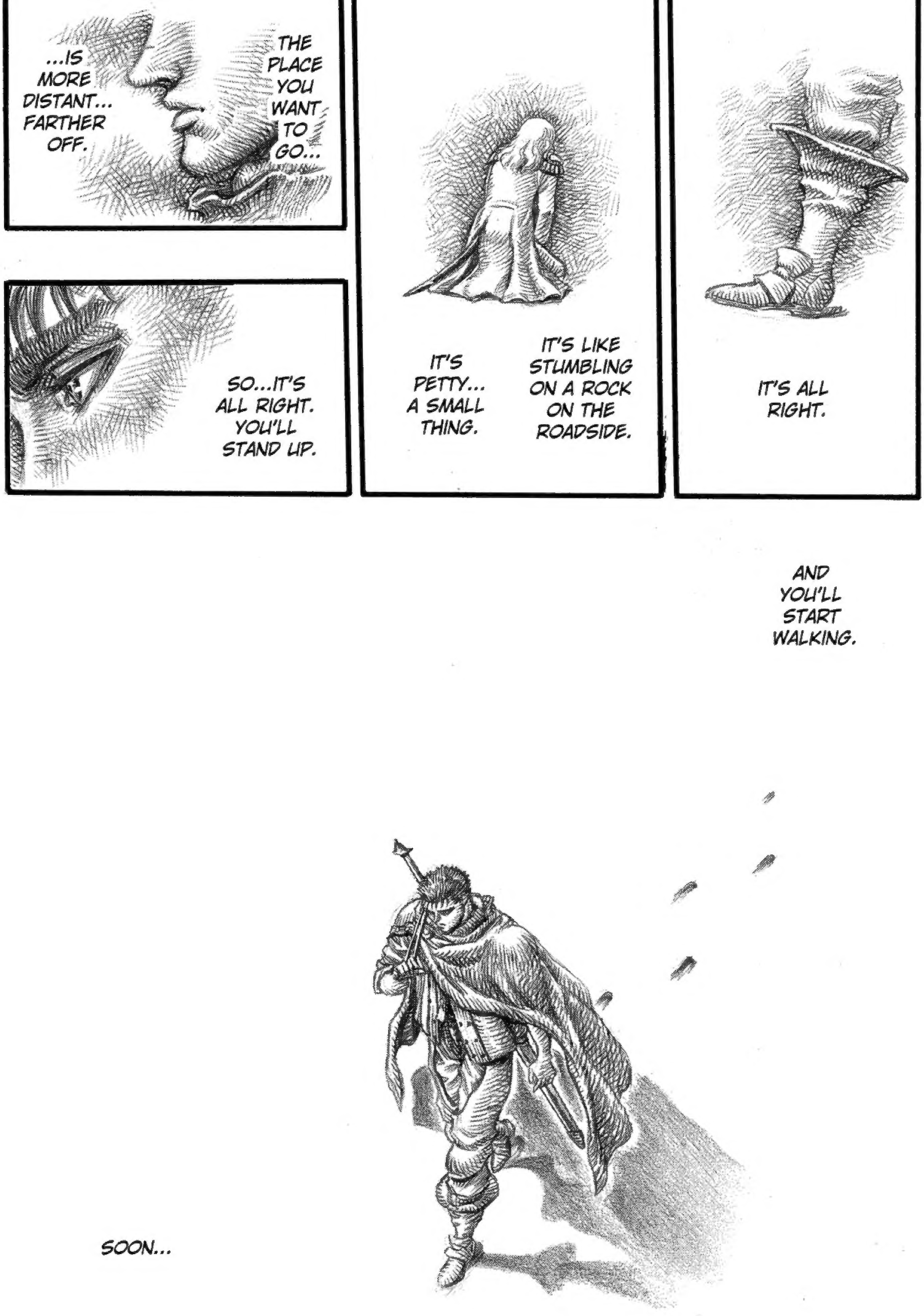
バサ‥

TAKE CARE...
GRIFFITH...
......
......

...
GU--

GUTS...
ギュ…

GUTS REALLY LEFT US... WITHOUT EVEN LOOKING BACK.
SNIFF
IT'S...A FLUKE...IT HAD TO BE.
DAMMIT!! I WON'T ACCEPT THIS!!
... ...
....

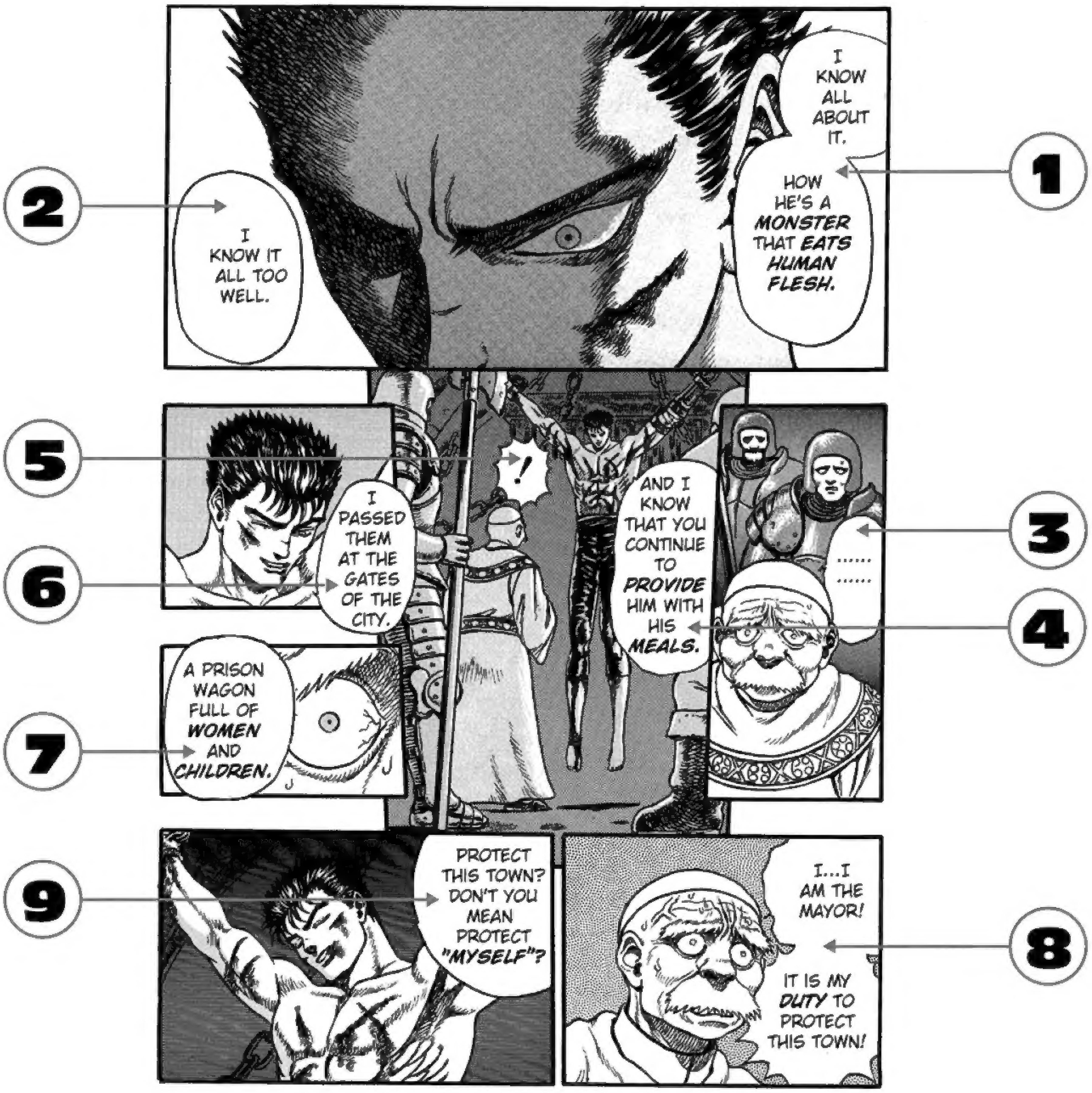

THE PLACE YOU WANT TO GO...
...IS MORE DISTANT... FARTHER OFF.
SO...IT'S ALL RIGHT. YOU'LL STAND UP.
IT'S PETTY... A SMALL THING.
IT'S LIKE STUMBLING ON A ROCK ON THE ROADSIDE.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
AND YOU'LL START WALKING.
SOON...

THE MORNING DEPARTURE (3): END

STOP

This is the back of the book!

This manga collection is translated into English but oriented in right-to-left reading format at the creator's request, maintaining the artwork's visual orientation as originally published in Japan. If you've never read manga in this way before, take a look at the diagram below to give yourself an idea of how to go about it. Basically, you'll be starting in the upper right corner and will read each balloon and panel moving right to left. It may take some getting used to, but you should get the hang of it very quickly. Have fun!


1
I KNOW ALL ABOUT IT.
HOW HE'S A *MONSTER* THAT *EATS HUMAN FLESH.*
2
I KNOW IT ALL TOO WELL.
3
......
......
4
AND I KNOW THAT YOU CONTINUE TO *PROVIDE* HIM WITH HIS *MEALS.*
5
!
6
I PASSED THEM AT THE GATES OF THE CITY.
7
A PRISON WAGON FULL OF *WOMEN* AND *CHILDREN.*
8
I...I AM THE MAYOR!
IT IS MY *DUTY* TO PROTECT THIS TOWN!
9
PROTECT THIS TOWN? DON'T YOU MEAN PROTECT *"MYSELF"*?

COMICS & GRAPHIC NOVELS / MANGA / HORROR

BERSERK

KENTARO MIURA **8** ベルセルク
三浦建太郎

The century-spanning war between Midland and Chuder continues unabated. The two warring kingdoms, vying for supremacy, launch headfirst into what will become the final battle. Spearheading the Midland forces are the Band of the Hawk, led by the charismatic Griffith, with the fearless Guts as his trusted champion. Should the Hawks triumph again on the battlefield, the war with Chuder may end, but the secret war within Midland may begin as those who seek to rise within the court see the ambitious Griffith as an obstacle to obtaining power. And nothing is more formidable than an enemy unseen!

Created by Kentaro Miura, *Berserk* is medieval manga mania at its bloodstained best, a volatile concoction of raging action, abyssal horror, and graveyard humor that has the initiates lining up for more and the faint hearted heading for the hills. Thank you, sir, may I have another!

This collection is translated into English but oriented in right-to-left reading format, as originally published.

DARK HORSE MANGA

DarkHorse.com

FOR READERS 18+
FOR MATURE
READERS